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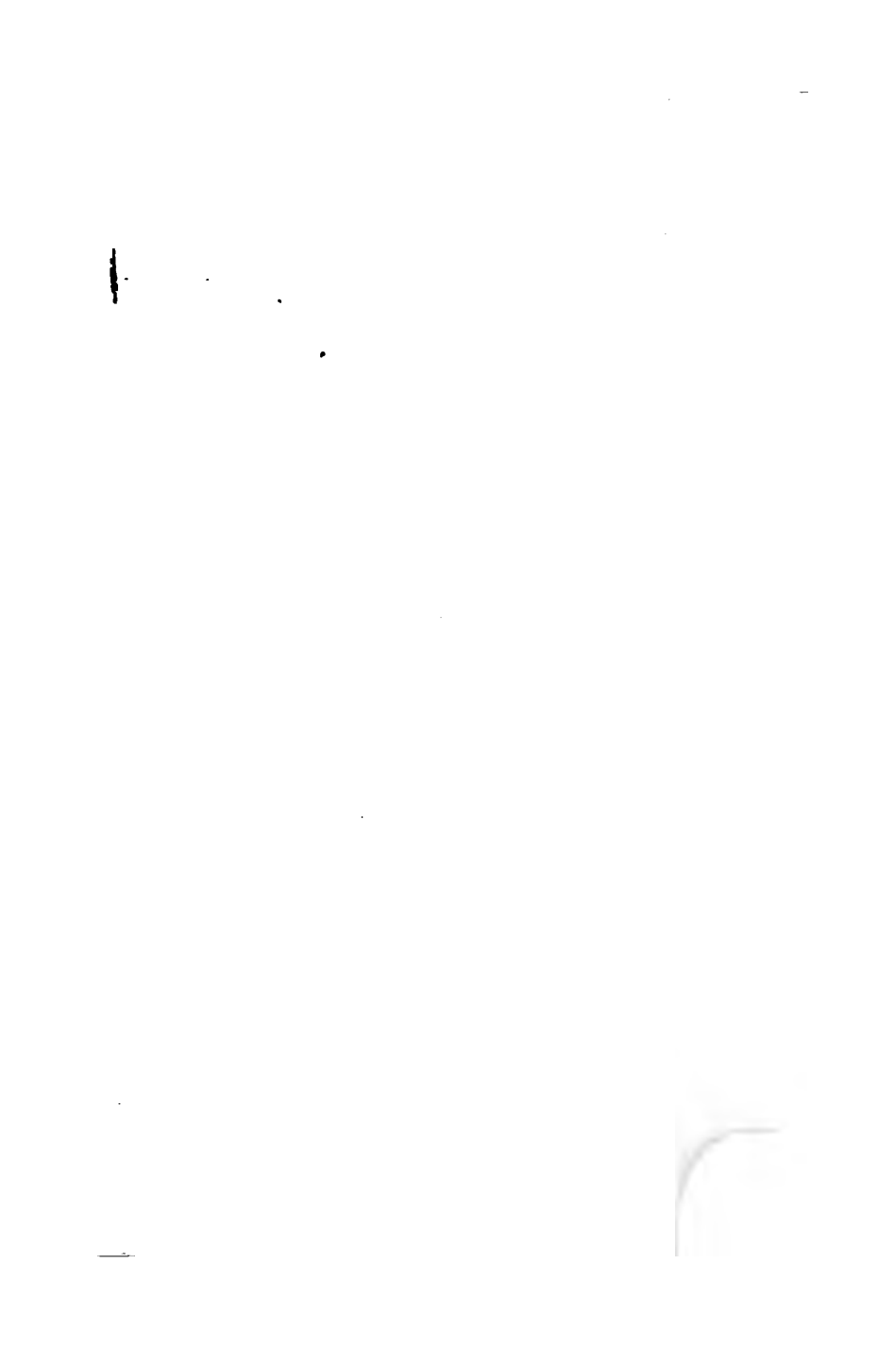


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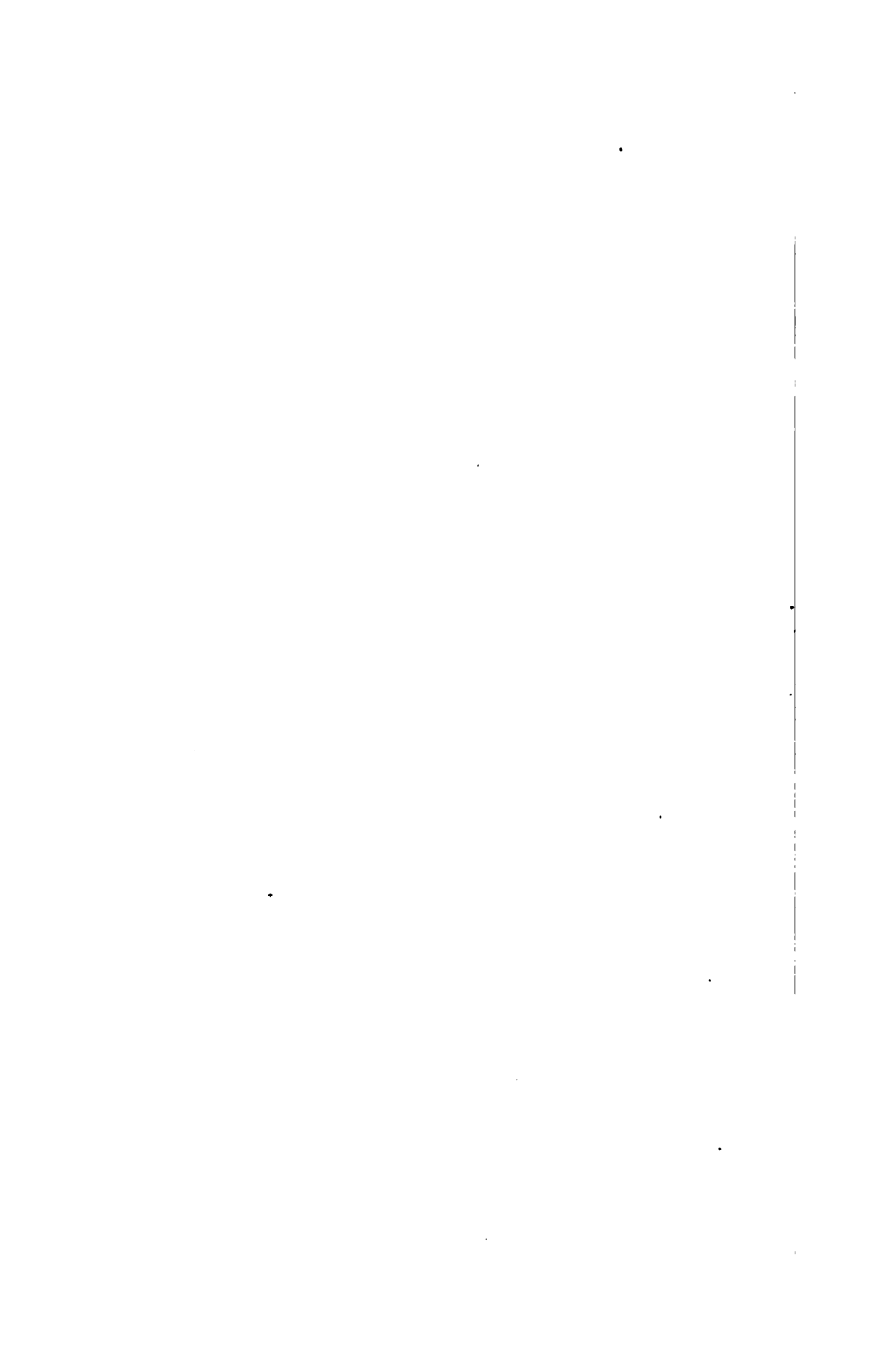


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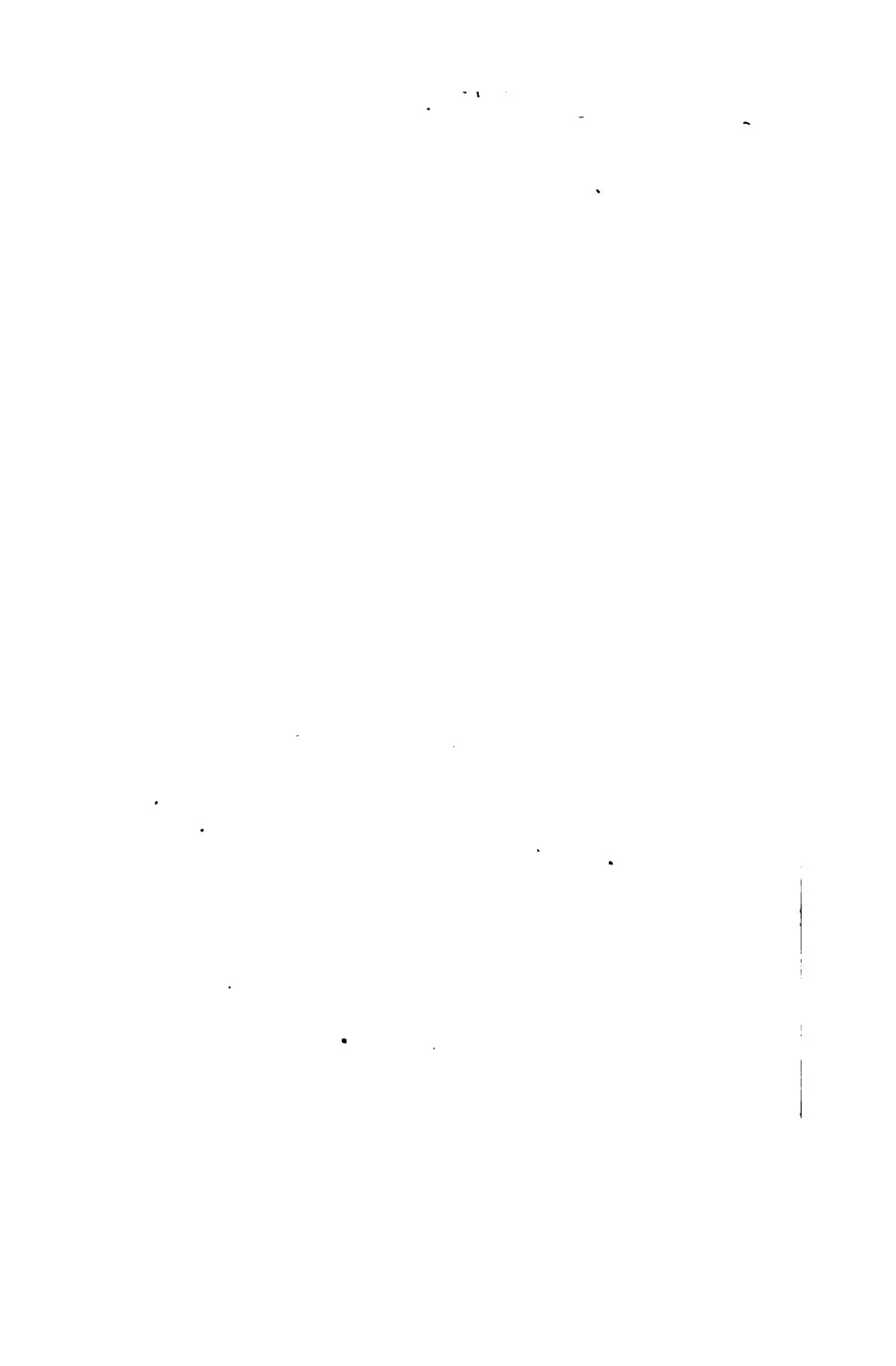


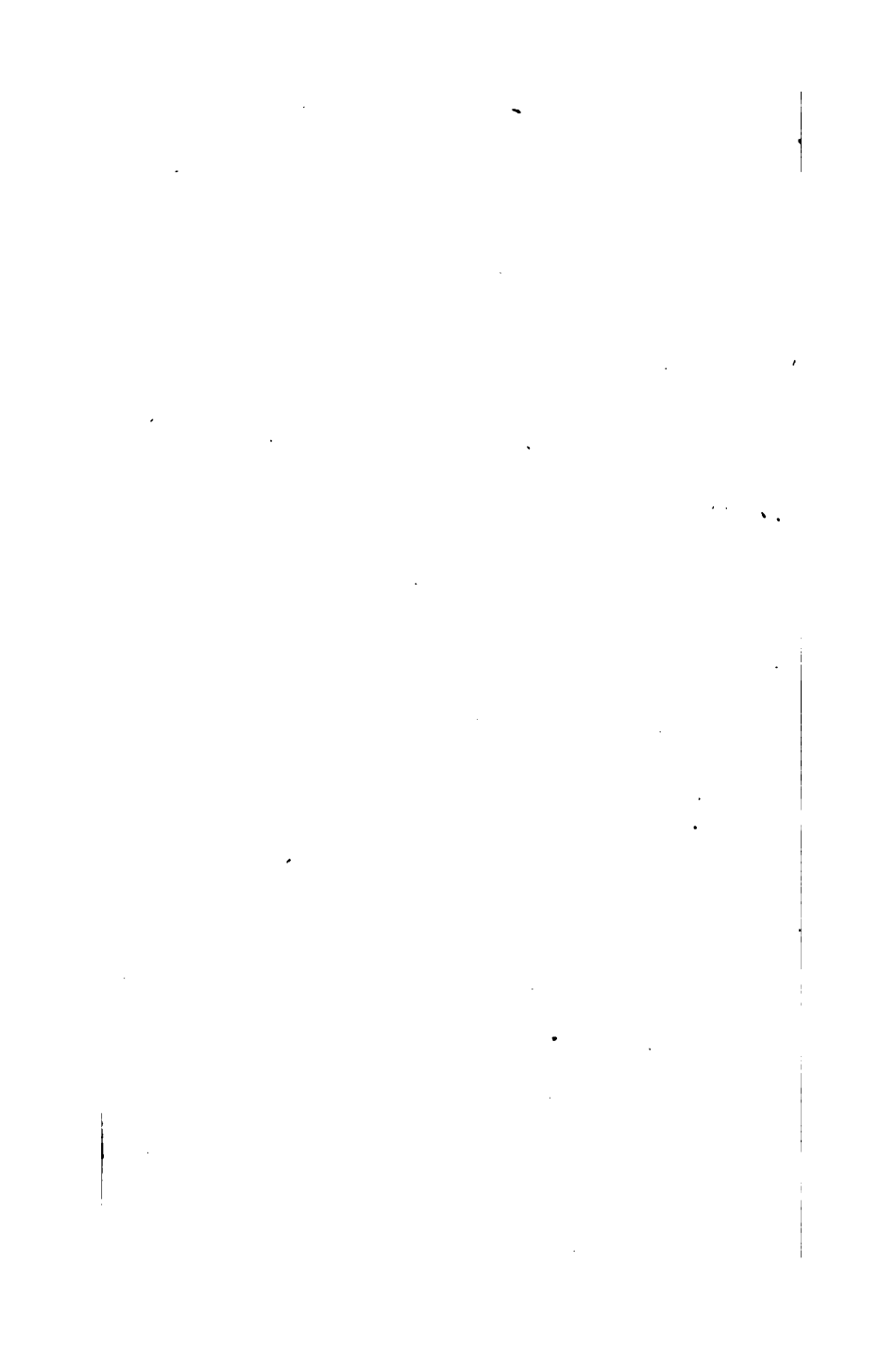


OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

*Engraved by Freeman, from an Original Painting  
by Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

*James Cochrane & Co. 11, Waterloo Place.*





THE  
VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

A TALE.

BY OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.D.

WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

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*Sperate miseri, cavete felices.*

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C. W.





## MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

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THE name of Goldsmith holds an enviable position in the annals of English literature. The versatility of his genius, his elegant taste, and the benevolence of his disposition, carried him with an easy flight over wide and varied provinces of study, and enabled him to bestow a grace on whatever he touched, which renders his writings as delightful as they are discursive.

This eminent man was born, November 29th, 1728, at Pallice, otherwise Pallas, in the parish of Farney, county Longford in Ireland. His father was a clergyman of the church of England, whose virtues and poverty are said to be described with equal truth in the exquisite picture of the country parson, in the *Deserted Village*. The fortunes of this amiable man, who had a wife and seven children to support out of his miserable pittance, were subsequently improved by the grant of a living, which was given him, in the county of Roscommon; but he died too early to see his children provided for, and our poet was left to the sole care of his mother. One of those minute circumstances, which add so much interest to biography, and for which the public is indebted to the Rev. John Graham of Lifford, throws great light upon the situation of the widow, and her humble mode of living. According to that gentleman, the shop-book of a little grocer in the town of Ballymahon, has the name of Mrs. Goldsmith in many of its columns; trifling purchases, it farther appears, having been generally made through the

medium of her son Oliver, then about eleven or twelve years old.

Soon after this period, however, the original cast of Oliver's mind attracted the attention of his relative, the Rev. Thomas Contarine; and, through the kindness of that gentleman, he was sent from Ballymahon, where he had spent most of his time in playing the flute, and rambling on the banks of the Inny, to a classical seminary at Edgeworth's-town, whence, in June 1744, he proceeded to Dublin, and was entered at Trinity College as a sizer. The circumstances in which he had been brought up were not such as to foster pride, but the delicacy of his mind revolted against the petty and degrading tyranny to which the grade of a sizer was then subjected. It is much to the honour of Cambridge, that it was the first to do away with the custom, which imposed the performance of a servile office on the young scholars of talent, who had less wealth, though abundantly more learning than their associates. Poor Goldsmith experienced all the evils of the system, as it was then in vogue, to their full extent; but he continued to endure them for three years, without allowing his temper to overcome his prudence; till, towards the end of that period, he became involved in an adventure, which obliged him to leave the college for a time: but he returned, and in 1749 took the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

On thus completing his course of preliminary study, he was advised by Mr. Contarine to turn his attention to that of medicine; an advice, which he appears to have readily followed, as in 1752 we find him regularly pursuing the science in the university of Edinburgh.

It is well known that the time he spent there was not passed in the most agreeable manner, and he took a pleasure in venting his occasional fits of ill-humour in sarcastic remarks on the country and its inhabitants. A kindly and good-natured pleasantry is however observable even in his sarcasms; and among the few letters he has left, those which he wrote to his friends at this period are perhaps the most

amusing. One of these letters has just been brought to light by the talented and spirited conductor of the Athenæum. 'I shall tire you,' he says, 'with a description of this unfruitful country, where I must lead you over their hills all brown with heath, or their valleys scarce able to feed a rabbit! Man alone seems to be the only creature who has arrived to the natural size in this poor soil: every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape: no grove or brook lend their music to cheer the stranger, or make the inhabitants forget their poverty: yet, with all these disadvantages to call him down to humility, a Scotchman is one of the proudest things alive: the poor have pride ever ready to relieve them; if mankind should happen to despise them, they are masters of their own admiration, and that they can plentifully bestow on themselves. From their pride and poverty, as I take it, results one advantage this country enjoys; namely, the gentlemen are much better bred than amongst us. No such character here as our fox-hunters; and they have expressed great surprise, when I informed them that some men in Ireland, of a thousand pounds a year, spend their whole lives in running after a hare, drinking to be drunk, and getting every girl that will let them with child; and, truly, if such a being, equipped in his hunting-dress, came among a circle of Scotch gentry, they would behold him with the same astonishment that a countryman would king George on horseback. The men have generally high cheek-bones, and are lean and swarthy, fond of action, dancing in particular; though, now I have mentioned dancing, let me say something of their balls, which are very frequent here. When a stranger enters the dancing-hall, he sees one end of the room taken up with the ladies, who sit, dismally, in a group by themselves; on the other end stand their pensive partners, that are to be; but no more intercourse between the sexes than there is between two countries at war. The ladies, indeed, may ogle, and the gentlemen sigh; but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce. At length, to interrupt hostilities, the lady-directress, or intend-

ant, or what you will, pitches on a gentleman and lady to walk a minuet, which they perform with a formality that approaches despondence: after five or six couple have thus walked the gauntlet, all stand up to country-dances, each gentleman furnished with a partner from the aforesaid lady-directress: so they dance much, and say nothing; and thus concludes our assembly. I told a Scotch gentleman that such profound silence resembled the ancient procession of the Roman matrons, in honour of Ceres; and the Scotch gentleman told me (and, faith, I believe he was right) that I was a very great pedant for my pains. Now I am come to the ladies; and, to show that I love Scotland, and every thing that belongs to so charming a country, I insist on it, and will give him leave to break my head that denies it, that the Scotch ladies are ten thousand times handsomer and finer than the Irish. To be sure, now, I see your sisters, Betty and Peggy, vastly surprised at my partiality; but tell them flatly, I don't value them, or their fine skins, or eyes, or good sense, or —, a potato; for I say it, and will maintain it; and, as a convincing proof (I'm in a very great passion) of what I assert, the Scotch ladies say it themselves. But, to be less serious, where will you find a language so pretty, become a pretty mouth, as the broad Scotch? and the women here speak it in its highest purity. For instance, teach one of your young ladies to pronounce, 'Whoar will I gong,' with a becoming wideness of mouth, and I'll lay my life they will wound every hearer.' He, however, in some degree softens his satire on the ladies, and at the same time feelingly alludes to his situation, and his own homeliness of person, in the following passage of the same letter: 'But how ill, my Bob, does it become me to ridicule women, with whom I have scarce any correspondence! There are, 'tis certain, handsome women here, and 'tis as certain there are handsome men to keep them company. An ugly and a poor man is society for himself; and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance.'

But, notwithstanding the privations and difficulties with

which he had thus to struggle, he continued steadily to pursue his studies, and after the usual residence at Edinburgh proceeded to Leyden. It appears, however, that studious as he was, and much as he was straitened in his circumstances, he allowed himself to be tempted into a love of gambling, which more than once placed him on the verge of ruin. Owing to difficulties thus contracted, he found himself obliged to leave Leyden, and commenced the long pedestrian tour, by which he gained, it is probable, more valuable knowledge, both as a moralist and a poet, than he would have gained as a physician by a longer residence amid the dangers of a crowded city. Few persons would have had the courage to undertake a journey such as that which he contemplated, with means considerably better than those he possessed : but Goldsmith had at the same time a stronger, as well as a tenderer spirit than most men ; and he passed, without money in his pocket, over France, Italy, and the greater part of Germany. At one time his flute, at another his learning, furnished him with support ; and he was now a poor minstrel laboring hard to amuse a rustic audience, and now a scholar possessed of sufficient erudition and hardihood to seek board and shelter in the monasteries, by daring to dispute on the most abstruse themes with their holy inmates. At Louvain he is reported to have taken a degree ; and he contrived to reside for several months at Padua, at this time one of the most distinguished seminaries of education on the continent.

But this mode of life could not long present the fascinating attractions, with which it may for a short time allure a man of Goldsmith's habits and temperament. After spending, therefore, about twelve months in his travels, he returned to England ; and, having neither money nor friends, was obliged, as the only immediate resource at hand, to accept a situation as usher in a school at Peckham. This was the darkest period of his life ; and the narrative which he has put into the mouth of George seems to have been in every respect a faithful picture of the miseries he endured in his new employment. It was with great joy, consequently, that he obtained the situa-

tion of journeyman to a chemist on Fish Street Hill, where he might have remained in obscurity for years, but for the providential visit of Dr. Sleigh, his countryman and fellow-student, to the shop, in which he was performing the part of what might be considered porter to the establishment. The kindness and liberality of the doctor, and his respect for Goldsmith's talents, induced him to take immediate steps for placing him in a better situation; and through his exertions our poet was in a short time respectably settled as a physician, first on Bankside, and afterwards in the neighbourhood of the Temple.

Improved, however, as his circumstances apparently were by this change, they were not considerably so in reality. The fees he received were few and rare; and he was at length obliged to have recourse to his genius, as the only means in England, as it had been on the continent, of obtaining bread. His first great literary speculation was the publication of *An Essay on Polite Literature in Europe*, by subscription; the profits of which he expected would be sufficient to enable him to proceed to India, where he had obtained an appointment as physician to one of the company's factories.

But this undertaking failed; and he was constrained to pursue the profession of an author, seeking employment among the booksellers and the conductors of periodicals. In this manner it was that he became an essayist; and his excellent little work, the *Citizen of the World*, was the result of his lucubrations, while at this stage of his literary career. At that period a higher value was set upon an ingenious essay than in the present; and we find that Goldsmith's talents had become sufficiently well known in the year 1761, to render his acquaintance acceptable to Dr. Johnson. The Vicar of Wakefield was produced some time after their friendship commenced; and it was mainly owing to the kindness of Johnson, that it found its way into the world. 'I received,' says he, as his words are recorded by his biographer, 'a message one morning from poor Goldsmith, that he was in great distress; and as it was not in his power to come

to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly: I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me, that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return; and, having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill.'

It is worthy of mention, however, that Newberry, to whom the work was sold, had so little hope of its success, that he allowed the manuscript to remain unpublished till the appearance of *The Traveller*, which so increased the fame of the author, that he no longer feared the possibility of obtaining the attention of the public for his novel. The success of both the poem and the tale were of the most encouraging kind; and the author, on the strength of that success, assumed the scarlet cloak, and other insignia of his honourable profession; became a member of the celebrated Literary Club, which consisted of the first men of the age; and lived in a style altogether becoming the change which he had made in his external appearance. But this involved him in difficulties, which kept him continually toiling at the oar; and his fine mind was thus employed in making abridgments and compilations, while it was so well able to produce works, which might have improved his age, and delighted posterity. The *Letters on the History of England*, originally ascribed to Lord Lyttleton, the abridgments of the histories of Rome, Greece, and England, and a collection of miscellaneous pieces, were the result of his labours at this period. But the lively little poem of *Retaliation*, the comedy of *Sh*



Stoops to Conquer, that of The Good-natured Man, and The History of the Earth and Animated Nature, afford the most convincing proofs how fertile and active his genius remained under all the hindrances which opposed its fair exertion. The termination of Goldsmith's career and life, which was accelerated by his improperly administering to himself a dose of James's powders, took place April 4th, 1774.

In his person he exhibited few indications of the excellence of his mind. He was low and stout ; and his face, which was strongly marked with the small-pox, would have been positively disagreeable, but for the strong marks which it bore of that habit of reflection, which, unpromising as it was, it could not wholly conceal. Of his temper, all who have spoken of him, are agreed in saying, that he was inconsiderate in pecuniary matters, and warm in his feelings ; but faithful in his friendships, generous even beyond his means, and gentle and benevolent in all his actions and dispositions. His works are too widely circulated to render it necessary that we should eulogise him as an author. The Vicar of Wakefield, with which we are at present only concerned, is allowed by all persons of taste to be one of the brightest gems in the whole circle of modern fiction. It can never be read without emotion and profit : it is as beautiful as it is true, and as true as it is beautiful.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THERE are a hundred faults in this thing, and a hundred things might be said to prove them beauties : but it is needless. A book may be amusing with numerous errors, or it may be very dull without a single absurdity. The hero of this piece unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth ; he is a priest, a husbandman, and the father of a family. He is drawn as ready to teach, and ready to obey ; as simple in affluence, and majestic in adversity. In this age of opulence and refinement, how can such a character please ? Such as are fond of high life, will turn with disdain from the simplicity of his country fire-side ; such as mistake ribaldry for humour, will find no wit in his harmless conversation ; and such as have been taught to deride religion, will laugh at one, whose chief stores of comfort are drawn from futurity.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.



THE

VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

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CHAP. I.—The description of the family of Wakefield, in which a kindred likeness prevails, as well of minds as of persons.

I WAS ever of opinion, that the honest man, who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single, and only talked of population. From this motive, I had scarce taken orders a year, before I began to think seriously of matrimony, and chose my wife, as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well. To do her justice, she was a good-natured, notable woman; and as for breeding, there were few country ladies who could show more. She could read any English book without much spelling; but for pickling, preserving, and cookery, none could excel her. She prided herself also upon being an excellent contriver in housekeeping; though I could never find that we grew richer with all her contrivances. I

However, we loved each other tenderly, and our fondness increased as we grew old: there was, in fact, nothing that could make us angry with the world, or each other. We had an elegant house, situate in a fine country, and a good neighbourhood. The year was spent in moral or rural amusements, in visiting our rich neighbours, and relieving such as were poor: we had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our ad-

ventures were by the fire-side, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown.

As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger visit us, to taste our gooseberry-wine, for which we had great reputation; and I profess, with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them find fault with it. Our cousins too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity, without any help from the heralds' office, and came very frequently to see us. Some of them did us no great honour by these claims of kindred; as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt amongst the number. However, my wife always insisted, that as they were the same flesh and blood, they should sit with us at the same table: so that if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy friends about us; for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer the guest, the better pleased he ever is with being treated; and as some men gaze with admiration at the colours of a tulip, or the wing of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy human faces. However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of a very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house, I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes a horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction to find he never came back to return them. By this, the house was cleared of such as we did not like; but never was the family of Wakefield known to turn the traveller or the poor dependent out of doors.

Thus we lived several years in a state of much happiness; not but that we sometimes had those little rubs which Providence sends to enhance the value of its favours. My orchard was often robbed by school-boys, and my wife's custards plundered by the cats or the children: the squire would sometimes fall asleep in the most pathetic parts of my sermon, or his lady return my wife's civilities at church with a mutilated courtesy. But we soon got over the uneasiness caused by such accidents, and usually in three or four days began to wonder how they vexed us.

My children, the offspring of temperance, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well-formed and healthy; my sons hardy and active, my daughters beautiful and blooming. When I stood in the midst of the little circle, which promised to be the supports of my declining age, I could not avoid repeating the famous story of Count Abensberg, who, in Henry the Second's progress through Germany, while other courtiers came with their treasures, brought his thirty-two children, and presented them to his sovereign as the most valuable offering he had to bestow. In this manner, though I had but six, I considered them as a very valuable present made to my country, and consequently looked upon it as my debtor. Our eldest son was named George, after his uncle, who left us ten thousand pounds. Our second child, a girl, I intended to call after her aunt Grissel; but my wife, who, during her pregnancy had been reading romances, insisted upon her being called Olivia. In less than another year we had another daughter, and now I was determined that Grissel should be her name; but a rich relation taking a fancy to stand god-mother, the girl was by her directions called Sophia: so that we had two romantic names in the family; but, I solemnly protest, I had no hand in it. Moses was our next, and, after an interval of twelve years, we had two sons more.

It would be fruitless to deny my exultation when I saw my little ones about me; but the vanity and the satisfaction of my wife were even greater than mine. When our visitors would say, 'Well, upon my word, Mrs. Primrose, you have the finest children in the whole country;'—'Ay, neighbour,' she would answer, 'they are as Heaven made them; handsome enough, if they be good enough; for handsome is, that handsome does.' And then she would bid the girls hold up their heads; who, to conceal nothing, were certainly very handsome. Mere outside is so very trifling a circumstance with me, that I should scarce have remembered to mention it, had it not been a general topic of conversation in the country. Olivia, now about eighteen, had that luxuriancy of

beauty, with which painters generally draw Hebe; open, sprightly, and commanding. Sophia's features were not so striking at first, but often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest, and alluring: the one vanquished by a single blow, the other by efforts successively repeated.

The temper of a woman is generally formed from the turn of her features; at least it was so with my daughters. Olivia wished for many lovers; Sophia to secure one: Olivia was often affected, from too great a desire to please; Sophia even repressed excellence, from her fears to offend: the one entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay, the other with her sense when I was serious. But these qualities were never carried to excess in either, and I have often seen them exchange characters for a whole day together. A suit of mourning has transformed my coquette into a prude, and a new set of ribbons has given her youngest sister more than natural vivacity. My eldest son, George, was bred at Oxford, as I intended him for one of the learned professions. My second boy, Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of miscellaneous education at home. But it is needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people, that had seen but very little of the world. In short, a family likeness prevailed through all; and, properly speaking, they had but one character, that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive.

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CHAP. II.—Family misfortunes—The loss of fortune only serves to increase the pride of the worthy.

The temporal concerns of our family were chiefly committed to my wife's management; as to the spiritual, I took them entirely under my own direction. The profits of my living, which amounted to about thirty-five pounds a year, I made over to the orphans and widows of the clergy of our diocese; for, having a sufficient fortune of my own, I was careless of temporalities, and felt a secret

pleasure in doing my duty without reward. I also set a resolution of keeping no curate, and of being acquainted with every man in the parish, exhorting the married men to temperance, and the bachelors to matrimony; so that in a few years it was a common saying, that there were three strange wants at Wakefield—a parson wanting pride, young men wanting wives, and alehouses wanting customers.

Matrimony was always one of my favourite topics, and I wrote several sermons to prove its happiness: but there was a peculiar tenet which I made a point of supporting; for I maintained, with Whiston, that it was unlawful for a priest of the church of England, after the death of his first wife, to take a second; or, to express it in one word, I valued myself upon being a strict monogamist.

I was early initiated into this important dispute, on which so many laborious volumes have been written. I published some tracts upon the subject myself, which, as they never sold, I have the consolation of thinking are read only by the happy few. Some of my friends called this my weak side; but, alas! they had not, like me, made it a subject of long contemplation. The more I reflected upon it, the more important it appeared. I even went a step beyond Whiston in displaying my principles: as he had engraven upon his wife's tomb that she was the only wife of William Whiston; so I wrote a similar epitaph for my wife, though still living, in which I extolled her prudence, economy, and obedience till death; and, having got it copied fair, with an elegant frame, it was placed over the chimney-piece, where it answered several very useful purposes. It admonished my wife of her duty to me, and my fidelity to her; it inspired her with a passion for fame; and constantly put her in mind of her end.

It was thus, perhaps, from hearing marriage so often recommended, that my eldest son, just upon leaving college, fixed his affections upon the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, who was a dignitary in the church, and in circumstances to give her a large fortune; but



fortune was her smallest accomplishment. Miss Arabella Wilmot was allowed by all, except my two daughters, to be completely pretty. Her youth, health, and innocence were still heightened by a complexion so transparent, and such a happy sensibility of look, as even age could not gaze on with indifference. As Mr. Wilmot knew that I could make a very handsome settlement on my son, he was not averse to the match; so both families lived together in all that harmony which generally precedes an expected alliance. Being convinced, by experience, that the days of courtship are the most happy of our lives, I was willing enough to lengthen the period; and the various amusements which the young couple every day shared in each other's company seemed to increase their passion. We were generally awaked in the morning by music, and on fine days rode a-hunting. The hours between breakfast and dinner, the ladies devoted to dress and study: they usually read a page, and then gazed at themselves in the glass, which even philosophers might own often presented the page of greatest beauty. At dinner my wife took the lead; for, as she always insisted upon carving every thing herself, it being her mother's way, she gave us, upon these occasions, the history of every dish. When we had dined, to prevent the ladies leaving us, I generally ordered the table to be removed; and sometimes, with the music-master's assistance, the girls would give us a very agreeable concert. Walking out, drinking tea, country-dances, and forfeits, shortened the rest of the day, without the assistance of cards; as I hated all manner of gaming, except backgammon, at which my old friend and I sometimes took a twopenny hit. Nor can I here pass over an ominous circumstance that happened the last time we played together; I only wanted to sling a quatre, and yet I threw deuce-ace five times running.

Some months were elapsed in this manner, till at last it was thought convenient to fix a day for the nuptials of the young couple, who seemed earnestly to desire it. During the preparations for the wedding, I need not describe the busy importance of my wife, nor the airy looks

of my daughters: in fact, my attention was fixed on another object—the completing a tract, which I intended shortly to publish, in defence of my favourite principle. As I looked upon this as a masterpiece both for argument and style, I could not, in the pride of my heart, avoid showing it to my old friend, Mr. Wilmot, as I made no doubt of receiving his approbation: but, not till too late, I discovered that he was most violently attached to the contrary opinion, and with good reason; for he was at that time actually courting a fourth wife. This, as may be expected, produced a dispute attended with some acrimony, which threatened to interrupt our intended alliance; but on the day before that appointed for the ceremony, we agreed to discuss the subject at large.

It was managed with proper spirit on both sides: he asserted that I was heterodox; I retorted the charge: he replied; and I rejoined. In the mean time, while the controversy was hottest, I was called out by one of my relations, who, with a face of concern, advised me to give up the dispute, at least till my son's wedding was over. 'How!' cried I, 'relinquish the cause of truth, and let him be a husband, already driven to the very verge of absurdity? You might as well advise me to give up my fortune as my argument.'—'Your fortune,' returned my friend, 'I am now sorry to inform you, is almost nothing. The merchant in town, in whose hands your money was lodged, has gone off, to avoid a statute of bankruptcy, and is thought not to have left a shilling in the pound. I was unwilling to shock you or the family with the account till after the wedding; but now it may serve to moderate your warmth in the argument; for I suppose your own prudence will enforce the necessity of dissembeling, at least till your son has the young lady's fortune secure.'—'Well,' returned I, 'if what you tell me be true, and if I am to be a beggar, it shall never make me a rascal, or induce me to disavow my principles. I'll go this moment, and inform the company of my circumstances; and as for the argument, I even here retract my former concessions in the old gentleman's favour, nor w

I allow him now to be a husband in any sense of the expression.'

It would be endless to describe the different sensations of both families, when I divulged the news of our misfortune; but what others felt was slight to what the lovers appeared to endure. Mr. Wilmot, who seemed before sufficiently inclined to break off the match, was by this blow soon determined: one virtue he had in perfection, which was prudence—too often the only one that is left us at seventy-two.

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CHAP. III.—A migration—the fortunate circumstances of our lives are generally found at last to be of our own procuring.

The only hope of our family now was, that the report of our misfortunes might be malicious or premature; but a letter from my agent in town soon came with a confirmation of every particular. The loss of fortune to myself alone would have been trifling: the only uneasiness I felt was for my family, who were to be humbled, without an education to render them callous to contempt.

Near a fortnight had passed before I attempted to restrain their affliction; for premature consolation is but the remembrancer of sorrow. During this interval, my thoughts were employed on some future means of supporting them; and at last a small cure of fifteen pounds a year was offered me in a distant neighbourhood, where I could still enjoy my principles without molestation. With this proposal I joyfully closed, having determined to increase my salary by managing a little farm.

Having taken this resolution, my next care was to get together the wrecks of my fortune; and, all debts collected and paid, out of fourteen thousand pounds we had but four hundred remaining. My chief attention, therefore, was now to bring down the pride of my family to their circumstances; for I well knew that aspiring beggary is wretchedness itself. 'You cannot be ignorant, my children,' cried I, 'that no prudence of ours could prevented our late misfortune; but prudence may

do much in disappointing its effects. We are now poor, my fondlings, and wisdom bids us to conform to our humble situation. Let us then, without repining, give up those splendors with which numbers are wretched, and seek, in humble circumstances, that peace with which all may be happy. The poor live pleasantly without our help; why then should not we learn to live without theirs? No, my children, let us from this moment give up all pretensions to gentility: we have still enough left for happiness, if we are wise; and let us draw upon content for the deficiencies of fortune.'

As my eldest son was bred a scholar, I determined to send him to town, where his abilities might contribute to our support and his own. The separation of friends and families is, perhaps, one of the most distressful circumstances attendant on penury. The day soon arrived on which we were to disperse for the first time. My son, after taking leave of his mother and the rest, who mingled their tears with their kisses, came to ask a blessing from me. This I gave him from my heart, and which, added to five guineas, was all the patrimony I had now to bestow. 'You are going, my boy,' cried I, 'to London on foot, in the manner Hooker, your great ancestor, travelled there before you. Take from me the same horse that was given him by the good bishop Jewel, this staff; and take this book too; it will be your comfort on the way: these two lines in it are worth a million:—I have been young, and now am old; yet never saw I the righteous man forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread. Let this be your consolation as you travel on. Go, my boy: whatever be thy fortune, let me see thee once a year: still keep a good heart, and farewell.' As he was possessed of integrity and honour, I was under no apprehensions from throwing him naked into the amphitheatre of life; for I knew he would act a good part, whether vanquished or victorious.

His departure only prepared the way for our own, which arrived a few days afterwards. The leaving a neighbourhood, in which we had enjoyed so many hours of tranquillity, was not without a tear, which scarce for-

titude itself could suppress. Besides, a journey of seventy miles, to a family that had hitherto never been above ten from home, filled us with apprehension; and the cries of the poor, who followed us for some miles, contributed to increase it. The first day's journey brought us in safety within thirty miles of our future retreat, and we put up for the night at an obscure inn, in a village by the way. When we were shown a room, I desired the landlord, in my usual way, to let us have his company, with which he complied, as what he drank would increase the bill next morning. He knew, however, the whole neighbourhood, to which I was removing; particularly squire Thornhill, who was to be my landlord, and who lived within a few miles of the place. This gentleman he described as one who desired to know little more of the world than its pleasures, being particularly remarkable for his attachment to the fair sex. He observed, that no virtue was able to resist his arts and assiduity; and that there was scarce a farmer's daughter within ten miles round but what had found him successful and faithless. Though this account gave me some pain, it had a very different effect upon my daughters, whose features seemed to brighten with the expectation of an approaching triumph; nor was my wife less pleased and confident of their allurements and virtue. While our thoughts were thus employed, the hostess entered the room to inform her husband, that the strange gentleman, who had been two days in the house, wanted money, and could not satisfy them for his reckoning. 'Want money!' replied the host: 'that must be impossible; for it was no later than yesterday he paid three guineas to our beadle to spare an old broken soldier, that was to be whipped through the town for dog-stealing.' The hostess, however, still persisting in her first assertion, he was preparing to leave the room, swearing that he would be satisfied one way or another, when I begged the landlord would introduce me to a stranger of so much charity as he described. With this he complied, showing in a gentleman who seemed to be about thirty, dressed in clothes that once were laced. His person was well-formed, and

his face marked with the lines of thinking. He had something short and dry in his address, and seemed not to understand ceremony, or to despise it. Upon the landlord's leaving the room, I could not avoid expressing my concern for the stranger, at seeing a gentleman in such circumstances, and offered him my purse to satisfy the present demand. 'I take it with all my heart, sir,' replied he; 'and am glad that a late oversight, in giving what money I had about me, has shown me that there are still some men like you. I must, however, previously entreat being informed of the name and residence of my benefactor, in order to repay him as soon as possible.' In this I satisfied him fully, not only mentioning my name, and late misfortune, but the place to which I was going to remove. 'This,' cried he, 'happens still more lucky than I hoped for, as I am going the same way myself, having been detained here two days by the floods, which, I hope, by to-morrow, will be found passable.' I testified the pleasure I should have in his company; and my wife and daughters joining in entreaty, he was prevailed upon to stay supper. The stranger's conversation, which was at once pleasing and instructive, induced me to wish for a continuance of it; but it was now high time to retire, and take refreshment against the fatigues of the following day.

The next morning we all set forward together: my family on horseback, while Mr. Burchell, our new companion, walked along the foot-path by the road-side, observing, with a smile, that as we were ill mounted, he would be too generous to attempt leaving us behind. As the floods were not yet subsided, we were obliged to hire a guide, who trotted on before, Mr. Burchell and I bringing up the rear. We lightened the fatigues of the road with philosophical disputes, which he seemed to understand perfectly: but what surprised me most was, that though he was a money-borrower, he defended his opinions with as much obstinacy as if he had been my patron. He now and then also informed me to whom the different seats belonged that lay in our view as we travelled the road. 'That,' cried he, pointing to a ve-

magnificent house which stood at some distance, 'belongs to Mr. Thornhill, a young gentleman who enjoys a large fortune, though entirely dependent on the will of his uncle, sir William Thornhill, a gentleman who, content with a little himself, permits his nephew to enjoy the rest, and chiefly resides in town.'—'What!' cried I, 'is my young landlord then the nephew of a man, whose virtues, generosity, and singularities are so universally known? I have heard sir William Thornhill represented as one of the most generous, yet whimsical men in the kingdom; a man of consummate benevolence.'—'Something, perhaps, too much so,' replied Mr. Burchell: 'at least, he carried benevolence to an excess when young; for his passions were then strong; and as they all were upon the side of virtue, they led it up to a romantic extreme. He early began to aim at the qualifications of the soldier and the scholar; was soon distinguished in the army, and had some reputation among men of learning. Adulation ever follows the ambitious; for such alone receive most pleasure from flattery. He was surrounded with crowds, who showed him only one side of their character; so that he began to lose a regard for private interest in universal sympathy. He loved all mankind; for fortune prevented him from knowing that they were rascals. Physicians tell us of a disorder, in which the whole body is so exquisitely sensible, that the slightest touch gives pain: what some have thus suffered in their persons, this gentleman felt in his mind. The slightest distress, whether real or fictitious, touched him to the quick, and his soul laboured under a sickly sensibility of the miseries of others. Thus disposed to relieve, it will be easily conjectured, he found numbers disposed to solicit: his profusions began to impair his fortune, but not his good-nature; that, indeed, was seen to increase as the other seemed to decay; he grew improvident, as he grew poor; and though he talked like a man of sense, his actions were those of a fool. Still, however, being surrounded with importunity, and no longer able to satisfy every request that was made of him, instead of money he gave promises. They were all he had to be-

stow, and he had not resolution enough to give any man pain by a denial. By this he drew round him crowds of dependents, whom he was sure to disappoint, yet wished to relieve : these hung upon him for a time, and left him with merited reproaches and contempt ; but in proportion as he became contemptible to others, he became despicable to himself. His mind had leaned upon their adulation, and, that support taken away, he could find no pleasure in the applause of his heart, which he had never learned to reverence. The world now began to wear a different aspect : the flattery of his friends began to dwindle into simple approbation ; approbation soon took the more friendly form of advice ; and advice, when rejected, produced their reproaches. He now, therefore, found that such friends as benefits had gathered round him were little estimable ; he now found that a man's own heart must be ever given to gain that of another. I now found, that—that—I forgot what I was going to observe : in short, sir, he resolved to respect himself, and laid down a plan of restoring his falling fortune. For this purpose, in his own whimsical manner, he travelled through Europe on foot ; and now, though he has scarce attained the age of thirty, his circumstances are more affluent than ever. At present his bounties are more rational and moderate than before ; but he still preserves the character of a humorist, and finds most pleasure in eccentric virtues.'

My attention was so much taken up by Mr. Burchell's account, that I scarce looked forward as we went along, till we were alarmed by the cries of my family ; when, turning, I perceived my youngest daughter in the midst of a rapid stream, thrown from her horse, and struggling with the torrent. She had sunk twice, nor was it in my power to disengage myself in time to bring her relief. My sensations were even too violent to permit my attempting her rescue : she must have certainly perished, had not my companion, perceiving her danger, instantly plunged in to her relief, and, with some difficulty, brought her in safety to the opposite shore. By taking the current a little farther up, the rest of



beauty, with which painters generally draw Hebe; open, sprightly, and commanding. Sophia's features were not so striking at first, but often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest, and alluring: the one vanquished by a single blow, the other by efforts successively repeated.

The temper of a woman is generally formed from the turn of her features; at least it was so with my daughters. Olivia wished for many lovers; Sophia to secure one: Olivia was often affected, from too great a desire to please; Sophia even repressed excellence, from her fears to offend: the one entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay, the other with her sense when I was serious. But these qualities were never carried to excess in either, and I have often seen them exchange characters for a whole day together. A suit of mourning has transformed my coquette into a prude, and a new set of ribbons has given her youngest sister more than natural vivacity. My eldest son, George, was bred at Oxford, as I intended him for one of the learned professions. My second boy, Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of miscellaneous education at home. But it is needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people, that had seen but very little of the world. In short, a family likeness prevailed through all; and, properly speaking, they had but one character, that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive.

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CHAP. II.—Family misfortunes—The loss of fortune only serves to increase the pride of the worthy.

The temporal concerns of our family were chiefly committed to my wife's management; as to the spiritual, I took them entirely under my own direction. The profits of my living, which amounted to about thirty-five pounds a year, I made over to the orphans and widows of the clergy of our diocese; for, having a sufficient fortune of my own, I was careless of temporalities, and felt a secret

pleasure in doing my duty without reward. I also set a resolution of keeping no curate, and of being acquainted with every man in the parish, exhorting the married men to temperance, and the bachelors to matrimony; so that in a few years it was a common saying, that there were three strange wants at Wakefield—a parson wanting pride, young men wanting wives, and alehouses wanting customers.

Matrimony was always one of my favourite topics, and I wrote several sermons to prove its happiness: but there was a peculiar tenet which I made a point of supporting; for I maintained, with Whiston, that it was unlawful for a priest of the church of England, after the death of his first wife, to take a second; or, to express it in one word, I valued myself upon being a strict monogamist.

I was early initiated into this important dispute, on which so many laborious volumes have been written. I published some tracts upon the subject myself, which, as they never sold, I have the consolation of thinking are read only by the happy few. Some of my friends called this my weak side; but, alas! they had not, like me, made it a subject of long contemplation. The more I reflected upon it, the more important it appeared. I even went a step beyond Whiston in displaying my principles: as he had engraven upon his wife's tomb that she was the only wife of William Whiston; so I wrote a similar epitaph for my wife, though still living, in which I extolled her prudence, economy, and obedience till death; and, having got it copied fair, with an elegant frame, it was placed over the chimney-piece, where it answered several very useful purposes. It admonished my wife of her duty to me, and my fidelity to her; it inspired her with a passion for fame; and constantly put her in mind of her end.

It was thus, perhaps, from hearing marriage so often recommended, that my eldest son, just upon leaving college, fixed his affections upon the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, who was a dignitary in the church, and in circumstances to give her a large fortune; but

bour after it was gone down ; but returned home to the expecting family, where smiling looks, a neat hearth, and pleasant fire, were prepared for our reception. Nor were we without guests : sometimes farmer Flamborough, our talkative neighbour, and often the blind piper, would pay us a visit, and taste our gooseberry-wine, for the making of which we had lost neither the receipt nor the reputation. These harmless people had several ways of being good company ; for while one played, the other would sing some soothing ballad, Johnny Armstrong's Last Good-night, or the cruelty of Barbara Allen. The night was concluded in the manner we began the morning, my youngest boys being appointed to read the lessons of the day ; and he that read loudest, distinctest, and best, was to have a halfpenny on Sunday, to put into the poor's box.

When Sunday came, it was indeed a day of finery, which all my sumptuary edicts could not restrain. How well soever I fancied my lectures against pride had conquered the vanity of my daughters, yet I still found them secretly attached to all their former finery : they still loved laces, ribbons, bugles, and catgut : my wife herself retained a passion for her crimson paduasoy, because I formerly happened to say it became her.

The first Sunday, in particular, their behaviour served to mortify me, I had desired my girls the preceding night to be dressed early the next day ; for I always loved to be at church a good while before the rest of the congregation. They punctually obeyed my directions ; but when we were to assemble in the morning at breakfast, down came my wife and daughters, dressed out in all their former splendor, their hair plastered up with pomatum, their faces patched to taste, their trains bundled up into a heap behind, and rustling at every motion. I could not help smiling at their vanity, particularly that of my wife, from whom I expected more discretion. In this exigence, therefore, my only resource was to order my son, with an important air, to call our coach. The girls were amazed at the command ; but I repeated it with more solemnity than before. ' Surely, my dear,

you jest,' cried my wife: 'we can walk it perfectly well: we want no coach to carry us now.'—'You mistake, child,' returned I: 'we do want a coach; for if we walk to church in this trim, the very children of the parish will hoot after us.'—'Indeed,' replied my wife, 'I always imagined that my Charles was fond of seeing his children neat and handsome about him.'—'You may be as neat as you please,' interrupted I, 'and I shall love you the better for it; but all this is not neatness, but frippery. These rufflings, and pinkings, and patchings, will only make us hated by all the wives of our neighbours. No, my children,' continued I, more gravely, 'those gowns may be altered into something of a plainer cut; for finery is very unbecoming in us, who want the means of decency. I do not know whether such flouncing and shredding is becoming even in the rich, if we consider, upon a moderate calculation, that the nakedness of the indigent world may be clothed from the trimmings of the vain.'

This remonstrance had the proper effect: they went with great composure, that very instant, to change their dress; and the next day I had the satisfaction of finding my daughters, at their own request, employed in cutting up their trains into Sunday waistcoats for Dick and Bill, the two little ones; and what was still more satisfactory, the gowns seemed improved by this curtailing.

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CHAP. V.—A new and great acquaintance introduced—what we place most hopes upon, generally proves most fatal.

At a small distance from the house, my predecessor had made a seat, overshadowed by a hedge of hawthorn and honey-suckle. Here, when the weather was fine, and our labour soon finished, we usually sat together, to enjoy an extensive landscape, in the calm of the evening: here too we drank tea, which now was become an occasional banquet; and as we had it but seldom, it diffused a new joy, the preparation for it being made with no

small share of bustle and ceremony. On these occasions, our two little ones always read for us, and they were regularly served after we had done. Sometimes, to give a variety to our amusements, the girls sung to the guitar; and while they thus formed a little concert, my wife and I would stroll down the sloping field, that was embellished with blue-bells and centaury, talk of our children with rapture, and enjoy the breeze that wafted both health and harmony.

In this manner we began to find that every situation in life may bring its own peculiar pleasures: every morning waked us to a repetition of toil; but the evening repaid it with vacant hilarity.

It was about the beginning of autumn, on a holiday, (for I kept such as intervals of relaxation from labour) that I had drawn out my family to our usual place of amusement, and our young musicians began their usual concert. As we were thus engaged, we saw a stag bound nimbly by, within about twenty paces of where we were sitting; and, by its panting, it seemed pressed by the hunters. We had not much time to reflect upon the poor animal's distress, when we perceived the dogs and horsemen come sweeping along at some distance behind, and making the very path it had taken. I was instantly for returning in with my family; but either curiosity or surprise, or some more hidden motive, held my wife and daughters to their seats. The huntsman, who rode foremost, passed us with great swiftness, followed by four or five persons more, who seemed in equal haste. At last, a young gentleman, of a more genteel appearance than the rest, came forward, and for a while regarding us, instead of pursuing the chase, stopped short, and, giving his horse to a servant who attended, approached us with a careless, superior air: he seemed to want no introduction, but was going to salute my daughters as one certain of a kind reception; but they had early learned the lesson of looking presumption out of countenance: upon which he let us know that his name was Thornhill, and that he was the owner of the estate that lay for some extent round us. He again, therefore,

offered to salute the female part of the family ; and such was the power of fortune and fine clothes, that he found no second repulse. As his address, though confident, was easy, we soon became more familiar ; and, perceiving musical instruments lying near, he begged to be favoured with a song. As I did not approve of such disproportioned acquaintance, I winked upon my daughters in order to prevent their compliance ; but my hint was counteracted by one from their mother ; so that with a cheerful air they gave us a favourite song of Dryden's. Mr. Thornhill seemed highly delighted with their performance and choice, and then took up the guitar himself. He played but very indifferently : however, my eldest daughter repaid his former applause with interest, and assured him that his tones were louder than even those of her master : at this compliment he bowed, which she returned with a courtesy. He praised her taste, and she commended his understanding : an age could not have made them better acquainted ; while the fond mother too, equally happy, insisted upon her landlord's stepping in, and taking a glass of gooseberry. The whole family seemed earnest to please him : my girls attempted to entertain him with topics they thought most modern ; while Moses, on the contrary, gave him a question or two from the ancients, for which he had the satisfaction of being laughed at : my little ones were no less busy, and fondly stuck close to the stranger. All my endeavours could scarce keep their dirty fingers from handling and tarnishing the lace on his clothes, and lifting up the flaps of his pocket-holes to see what was there. At the approach of evening he took leave ; but not till he had requested permission to renew his visit, which, as he was our landlord, we most readily agreed to.

As soon as he was gone, my wife called a council on the conduct of the day. She was of opinion, that it was a most fortunate hit ; for she had known even stranger things than that brought to bear : she hoped again to see the day in which we might hold up our heads with the best of them ; and concluded, she protested she could see no reason why the two Miss Wrinklers should marry

great fortunes, and her children get none. As this last argument was directed to me, I protested I could see no reason for it neither; nor why Mrs. Simpkins got the ten thousand pounds prize in the lottery, and we sat down with a blank. 'I protest, Charles,' cried my wife, 'this is the way you always damp my girls and me, when we are in spirits. Tell me, Soph, my dear, what do you think of our new visitor? don't you think he seemed to be good-natured?'—'Immensely so, indeed, mamma,' replied she: 'I think he has a great deal to say upon every thing, and is never at a loss; and the more trifling the subject, the more he has to say.'—'Yes,' cried Olivia, 'he is well enough for a man; but, for my part, I don't much like him, he is so extremely impudent and familiar; but on the guitar he is shocking.' These two last speeches I interpreted by contraries. I found by this that Sophia internally despised, as much as Olivia secretly admired him. 'Whatever may be your opinions of him, my children,' cried I, 'to confess a truth, he has not prepossessed me in his favour. Disproportioned friendships ever terminate in disgust: and I thought, notwithstanding all his ease, that he seemed perfectly sensible of the distance between us. Let us keep to companions of our own rank. There is no character more contemptible than a man that is a fortune-hunter; and I can see no reason why fortune-hunting women should not be contemptible too. Thus, at best, we shall be contemptible if his views are honourable; but if they be otherwise, I should shudder. but to think of that! It is true, I have no apprehensions from the conduct of my children, but I think there are some from his character.' I would have proceeded, but for the interruption of a servant from the squire, who, with his compliments, sent us a side of verison, and a promise to dine with us some days after. This well-timed present pleaded more powerfully in his favour than any thing I had to say could obviate: I therefore continued silent, satisfied with just having pointed out danger, and leaving it to their own discretion to avoid it. That virtue which requires to be ever guarded is scarcely worth the sentinel.

## CHAP. VI.—The happiness of a country fire-side.

As we carried on the former dispute with some degree of warmth, in order to accommodate matters, it was universally agreed that we should have a part of the venison for supper, and the girls undertook the task with alacrity. 'I am sorry,' cried I, 'that we have no neighbour or stranger to take part in this good cheer: feasts of this kind acquire a double relish from hospitality.'—'Bless me!' cried my wife, 'here comes our good friend Mr. Burchell, that saved our Sophia, and that run you down fairly in the argument.'—'Confute me in argument, child?' cried I: 'you mistake there, my dear: I believe there are but few that can do that: I never dispute your abilities at making a goose-pie, and I beg you'll leave argument to me.' As I spoke, poor Mr. Burchell entered the house, and was welcomed by the family, who shook him heartily by the hand, while little Dick officiously reached him a chair.

I was pleased with the poor man's friendship for two reasons; because I knew that he wanted mine, and I knew him to be friendly as far as he was able. He was known in our neighbourhood by the character of the poor gentleman that would do no good when he was young, though he was not yet thirty. He would at intervals talk with great good sense; but in general he was fondest of the company of children, whom he used to call harmless little men: he was famous, I found, for singing them ballads, and telling them stories; and seldom went out without something in his pocket for them; a piece of gingerbread, or a halfpenny whistle. He generally came for a few days into our neighbourhood once a year, and lived upon the neighbours' hospitality. He sat down to supper among us, and my wife was not sparing of her gooseberry-wine. The tale went round: he sung us old songs, and gave the children the story of the Buck of Beverland, with the History of Patient Grizzel, the Adventures of Cat-skin, and then Fair Rosamond's Bower. Our cock, which always crew at eleven, now told us it was time



for repose; but an unforeseen difficulty started about lodging the stranger: all our beds were already taken up, and it was too late to send him to the next alehouse. In this dilemma, little Dick offered him his part of the bed, if his brother Moses would let him lie with him. 'And I,' cries Bill, 'will give Mr. Burchell my part, if my sisters will take me to theirs.'—'Well done, my good children,' cried I: 'hospitality is one of the first Christian duties. The beast retires to his shelter, and the bird flies to its nest; but helpless man can only find refuge from his fellow-creature. The greatest stranger in this world was he that came to save it: he never had a house, as if willing to see what hospitality was left remaining amongst us. Deborah, my dear,' cried I to my wife, 'give those boys a lump of sugar each; and let Dick's be the largest, because he spoke first.'

In the morning early, I called out my whole family to help at saving an after-growth of hay; and our guest offering his assistance, he was accepted among the number. Our labours went on lightly: we turned the swath to the wind: I went foremost, and the rest followed in due succession. I could not avoid, however, observing the assiduity of Mr. Burchell in assisting my daughter Sophia in her part of the task. When he had finished his own, he would join in hers, and enter into a close conversation: but I had too good an opinion of Sophia's understanding, and was too well convinced of her ambition, to be under any uneasiness from a man of broken fortune. When we were finished for the day, Mr. Burchell was invited, as on the night before; but he refused, as he was to lie that night at a neighbour's, to whose child he was carrying a whistle. When gone, our conversation at supper turned upon our late unfortunate guest. 'What a strong instance,' said I, 'is that poor man of the miseries attending a youth of levity and extravagance! He by no means wants sense, which only serves to aggravate his former folly. Poor forlorn creature! where are now the revellers, the flatterers, that he could once inspire and command? Gone, perhaps, to attend the bagnio pander, grown rich by his extravagance.'

They once praised him, and now they applaud the pander : their former raptures at his wit are now converted into sarcasms at his folly : he is poor, and perhaps deserves poverty ; for he has neither the ambition to be independent, nor the skill to be useful.' Prompted, perhaps, by some secret reasons, I delivered this observation with too much acrimony, which my Sophia gently reproved. ' Whatsoever his former conduct may have been, papa, his circumstances should exempt him from censure now. His present indigence is a sufficient punishment for former folly ; and I have heard my papa himself say, that we should never strike one unnecessary blow at a victim, over whom Providence holds the scourge of its resentment.'—' You are right, Sophy,' cried my son Moses ; ' and one of the ancients finely represents so malicious a conduct, by the attempts of a rustic to flay Marsyas, whose skin, the fable tells us, had been wholly stripped off by another ; besides, I don't know if this poor man's situation be so bad as my father would represent it. We are not to judge of the feelings of others by what we might feel if in their place. However dark the habitation of the mole to our eyes, yet the animal itself finds the apartment sufficiently lightsome : and, to confess a truth, this man's mind seems fitted to his station ; for I never heard any one more sprightly than he was to-day, when he conversed with you.' This was said without the least design : however, it excited a blush, which she strove to cover by an affected laugh ; assuring him that she scarcely took any notice of what he said to her ; but that she believed he might once have been a very fine gentleman. The readiness with which she undertook to vindicate herself, and her blushing, were symptoms I did not internally approve ; but I repressed my suspicions.

As we expected our landlord the next day, my wife went to make the venison-pasty : Moses sat reading, while I taught the little ones : my daughters seemed equally busy with the rest ; and I observed them for a good while cooking something over the fire. I at first supposed they were assisting their mother ; but little Dick

informed me, in a whisper, that they were making a wash for the face. Washes of all kinds I had a natural antipathy to; for I knew that, instead of mending the complexion, they spoil it. I therefore approached my chair by slow degrees to the fire, and grasping the poker, as if it wanted mending, seemingly by accident, overturned the whole composition, and it was too late to begin another.

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CHAP. VII.—A town wit described—the dullest fellows may learn to be comical for a night or two.

When the morning arrived on which we were to entertain our young landlord, it may be easily supposed what provisions were exhausted to make an appearance: it may be also conjectured, that my wife and daughters expanded their gayest plumage on this occasion. Mr. Thornhill came with a couple of friends, his chaplain and feeder. The servants, who were numerous, he politely ordered to the next alehouse: but my wife, in the triumph of her heart, insisted on entertaining them all; for which, by the by, our family was pinched for three weeks after. As Mr. Burchell had hinted to us, the day before, that he was making some proposal of marriage to Miss Wilmot, my son George's former mistress, this a good deal damped the heartiness of his reception: but accident, in some measure, relieved our embarrassment; for one of the company happening to mention her name, Mr. Thornhill observed, with an oath, that he never knew any thing more absurd than calling such a fright a beauty; 'for, strike me ugly,' continued he, 'if I should not find as much pleasure in choosing my mistress by the information of a lamp under the clock of St. Dunstan's.' At this he laughed, and so did we: the jests of the rich are ever successful. Olivia too could not avoid whispering, loud enough to be heard, that he had an infinite fund of humour.

After dinner, I began with my usual toast, the church: for this I was thanked by the chaplain, as he said the

church was the only mistress of his affections. 'Come, tell us honestly, Frank,' said the squire, with his usual archness, 'suppose the church, your present mistress, dressed in lawn sleeves, on one hand, and Miss Sophia, with no lawn about her, on the other, which would you be for?'—'For both, to be sure,' cried the chaplain. 'Right, Frank,' cried the squire: 'for may this glass suffocate me, but a fine girl is worth all the priestcraft in the creation: for what are tithes and tricks but an imposition? all a confounded imposture! and I can prove it.'—'I wish you would,' cried my son Moses; 'and I think,' continued he, 'that I should be able to answer you.'—'Very well, sir,' cried the squire, who immediately smoked him, and winked on the rest of the company, to prepare us for the sport: 'if you are for a cool argument upon the subject, I am ready to accept the challenge. And, first, whether are you for managing it analogically or dialogically?'—'I am for managing it rationally,' cried Moses, quite happy at being permitted to dispute. 'Good again,' cried the squire: 'and, firstly, of the first, I hope you'll not deny that whatever is, is: if you don't grant me that, I can go no farther.'—'Why,' returned Moses, 'I think I may grant that; and make the best of it.'—'I hope, too,' returned the other, 'you will grant that a part is less than the whole.'—'I grant that, too,' cried Moses: 'it is but just and reasonable.'—'I hope,' cried the squire, 'you will not deny, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones.'—'Nothing can be plainer,' returned the other, and looked round him with his usual importance. 'Very well,' cried the squire, speaking very quick: 'the premises being thus settled, I proceed to observe, that the concatenation of self-existences, proceeding in a reciprocal duplicate ratio, naturally produce a problematical dialogism, which in some measure proves that the essence of spirituality may be referred to the second predicable.'—'Hold, hold,' cried the other, 'I deny that. Do you think I can thus tamely submit to such heterodox doctrines?'—'What!' replied the squire, as if in a passion, 'not submit? Answer me one plain question. Do you think Aristotle

right, when he says, that relatives are related?'—'Undoubtedly,' replied the other. 'If so, then,' cried the squire, 'answer me directly to what I propose: Whether do you judge the analytical investigation of the first part of my enthymem deficient *secundum quoad*, or *quoad minus*? and give me your reasons, I say, directly.'—'I protest,' cried Moses, 'I don't rightly comprehend the force of your reasoning; but if it be reduced to one single proposition, I fancy it may then have an answer.'—'O, sir,' cried the squire, 'I am your most humble servant; I find you want me to furnish you with argument and intellects too. No, sir, there, I protest, you are too hard for me.' This effectually raised the laugh against poor Moses, who sat the only dismal figure in a group of merry faces; nor did he offer a single syllable more during the whole entertainment.

But though all this gave me no pleasure, it had a very different effect upon Olivia, who mistook it for humour, though but a mere act of the memory. She thought him therefore a very fine gentleman; and such as consider what powerful ingredients a good figure, fine clothes, and fortune, are in that character, will easily forgive her. Mr. Thornhill, notwithstanding his real ignorance, talked with ease, and could expatiate upon the common topics of conversation with fluency. It is not surprising, then, that such talents should win the affections of a girl, who by education was taught to value an appearance in herself, and, consequently, to set a value upon it in another.

Upon his departure, we again entered into a debate upon the merits of our young landlord. As he directed his looks and conversation to Olivia, it was no longer doubted but that she was the object that induced him to be our visitor: nor did she seem to be much displeased at the innocent raillery of her brother and sister upon this occasion. Even Deborah herself seemed to share the glory of the day, and exulted in her daughter's victory, as if it were her own. 'And now, my dear,' cried she to me, 'I'll fairly own, that it was I that instructed my girls to encourage our landlord's addresses. I had always some ambition, and you now see that I was

right; for who knows how this may end?'—'Ay, who knows that indeed?' answered I, with a groan: 'for my part, I don't much like it: and I could have been better pleased with one that was poor and honest, than this fine gentleman, with his fortune and infidelity; for, depend on't, if he be what I suspect him, no freethinker shall ever have a child of mine.'

'Sure, father,' cried Moses, 'you are too severe in this; for Heaven will never arraign him for what he thinks, but for what he does. Every man has a thousand vicious thoughts, which arise, without his power to suppress. Thinking freely of religion may be involuntary with this gentleman; so that, allowing his sentiments to be wrong, yet, as he is purely passive in his assent, he is no more to be blamed for his errors, than the governor of a city without walls for the shelter he is obliged to afford an invading enemy.'

'True, my son,' cried I: 'but if the governor invites the enemy there, he is justly culpable; and such is always the case with those who embrace error. The vice does not lie in assenting to the proofs they see, but in being blind to many of the proofs that offer: so that, though our erroneous opinions be involuntary when formed, yet, as we have been wilfully corrupt, or very negligent, in forming them, we deserve punishment for our vice, or contempt for our folly.'

My wife now kept up the conversation, though not the argument: she observed, that several very prudent men of our acquaintance were freethinkers, and made very good husbands; and she knew some sensible girls that had skill enough to make converts of their spouses: 'And who knows, my dear,' continued she, 'what Olivia may be able to do? The girl has a great deal to say upon every subject, and to my knowledge is very well skilled in controversy.'

'Why, my dear, what controversy can she have read?' cried I: 'it does not occur to me that I ever put such books into her hands: you certainly overrate her merit.'—'Indeed, papa,' replied Olivia, 'she does not; I have read a great deal of controversy. I have read the dis-

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putes between Thwackum and Square, the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday the savage, and I am now employed in reading the controversy in Religious Courtship.'—'Very well,' cried I, 'that's a good girl: I find you are perfectly qualified for making converts; and so, go, help your mother to make the gooseberry-pie.'

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CHAP. VIII.—An amour, which promises little good fortune, yet may be productive of much.

The next morning we were again visited by Mr. Burchell, though I began, for certain reasons, to be displeased with the frequency of his return; but I could not refuse him my company and fire-side. It is true, his labour more than requited his entertainment; for he wrought amongst us with vigour, and, either in the meadow or at the hay-rick, put himself foremost: besides, he had always something amusing to say that lessened our toil; and was at once so out of the way, and yet so sensible, that I loved, laughed at, and pitied him. My only dislike arose from an attachment he discovered to my daughter: he would, in a jesting manner, call her his little mistress; and when he bought each of the girls a set of ribbons, hers was the finest. I knew not how, but he every day seemed to become more amiable, his wit to improve, and his simplicity to assume the superior airs of wisdom.

Our family dined in the field, and we sat, or rather reclined, round a temperate repast, our cloth spread upon the hay, while Mr. Burchell gave cheerfulness to the feast. To heighten our satisfaction, two blackbirds answered each other from opposite hedges, the familiar red-breast came and picked the crumbs from our laps, and every sound seemed but the echo of tranquillity. 'I never sit thus,' says Sophia, 'but I think of the two lovers, so sweetly described by Mr. Gay, who were struck dead in each other's arms. There is something so pathetic in the description, that I have read it a hun-

dred times with new rapture.'—' In my opinion,' cried my son, ' the finest strokes in that description are much below those in the *Acis and Galatea* of Ovid. The Roman poet understands the use of contrast better ; and upon that figure, artfully managed, all strength in the pathetic depends.'—' It is remarkable,' cried Mr. Burchell, ' that both the poets you mention have equally contributed to introduce a false taste into their respective countries, by loading all their lines with epithet. Men of little genius found them most easily imitated in their defects ; and English poetry, like that in the latter empire of Rome, is nothing at present but a combination of luxuriant images, without plot or connexion ; a string of epithets, that improve the sound without carrying on the sense. But, perhaps, madam, while I thus reprehend others, you'll think it just that I should give them an opportunity to retaliate ; and, indeed, I have made this remark only to have an opportunity of introducing to the company a ballad, which, whatever be its other defects, is, I think, at least free from those I have mentioned.'

## A BALLAD.

' Turn, gentle hermit of the dale,  
And guide my lonely way  
To where yon taper cheers the vale  
With hospitable ray :

' For here forlorn and lost I tread,  
With fainting steps and slow ;  
Where wilds, immeasurably spread,  
Seem lengthening as I go.'

' Forbear, my son,' the hermit cries,  
' To tempt the dangerous gloom ;  
For yonder faithless phantom flies  
To lure thee to thy doom.

' Here to the houseless child of want  
My door is open still ;  
And though my portion is but scant,  
I give it with good will.

' Then turn to-night, and freely share  
Whate'er my cell bestows ;  
My rushy couch and frugal fare,  
My blessing and repose.



## THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

'No flocks, that range the valley free,  
To slaughter I condemn.  
Taught by that Power that pities me,  
I learn to pity them :

'But from the mountain's grassy side  
A guiltless feast I bring ;  
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,  
And water from the spring.

'Then, pilgrim, turn ; thy cares forego ;  
All earth-born cares are wrong :  
Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little long.'

Soft as the dew from heaven descends,  
His gentle accents fell :  
The modest stranger lowly bends,  
And follows to the cell.

Far in a wilderness obscure  
The lonely mansion lay ;  
A refuge to the neighbouring poor,  
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch  
Required a master's care ;  
The wicket, opening with a latch,  
Received the harmless pair.

And now, when busy crowds retire,  
To take their evening rest,  
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,  
And cheer'd his pensive guest ;

And spread his vegetable store,  
And gaily press'd, and smiled ;  
And, skill'd in legendary lore,  
The lingering hours beguiled.

Around, in sympathetic mirth,  
Its tricks the kitten tries ;  
The cricket chirrups in the hearth,  
The crackling faggot flies.

But nothing could a charm impart  
To soothe the stranger's woe ;  
For grief was heavy at his heart,  
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the hermit spied,  
With answering care oppress'd :  
'And whence, unhappy youth,' he cried,  
'The sorrows of thy breast ?

'From better habitations spurn'd,  
Reluctant dost thou rove ?

Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,  
Or unregarded love ?

' Alas ! the joys that fortune brings,  
Are trifling, and decay ;  
And those who prize the paltry things,  
More trifling still than they.

' And what is friendship but a name,  
A charm that lulls to sleep ;  
A shade that follows wealth or fame,  
But leaves the wretch to weep ?

' And love is still an emptier sound ;  
The modern fair one's jest ;  
On earth unseen, or only found  
To warm the turtle's nest.

' For shame, fond youth ! thy sorrows hush,  
And spurn the sex,' he said ;  
But while he spoke, a rising blush  
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

Surprised, he sees new beauties rise,  
Swift mantling to the view,  
Like colours o'er the morning skies ;  
As bright, as transient too.

The bashful look, the rising breast,  
Alternate spread alarms :  
The lovely stranger stands confess'd  
A maid, in all her charms.

And, ' Ah ! forgive a stranger rude,  
A wretch forlorn,' she cried ;  
' Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude  
Where heaven and you reside :

' But let a maid thy pity share,  
Whom love has taught to stray ;  
Who seeks for rest, but finds despair  
Companion of her way.

' My father lived beside the Tyne ;  
A wealthy lord was he ;  
And all his wealth was mark'd as mine ;  
He had but only me.

' To win me from his tender arms,  
Unnumber'd suitors came ;  
Who praised me for imputed charms,  
And felt, or feign'd a flame.

' Each hour a mercenary crowd  
With richest proffers strove ;  
Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd,  
But never talk'd of love.

## THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

'In humble, simplest habit clad,  
No wealth or power had he :  
Wisdom and worth were all he had,  
But these were all to me.

'The blossom opening to the day,  
The dews of heaven refined,  
Could naught of purity display,  
To emulate his mind.

'The dew, the blossom on the tree,  
With charms inconstant shine ;  
Their charms were his, but, wo to me,  
Their constancy was mine !

'For still I tried each fickle art,  
Importunate and vain ;  
And while his passion touch'd my heart,  
I triumph'd in his pain :

'Till, quite dejected with my scorn,  
He left me to my pride,  
And sought a solitude forlorn,  
In secret, where he died.

'But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,  
And well my life shall pay :  
I'll seek the solitude he sought,  
And stretch me where he lay.

'And there, forlorn, despairing, hid,  
I'll lay me down and die :  
'Twas so for me that Edwin did,  
And so for him will I.'

'Forbid it, Heaven !' the hermit cried,  
And clasp'd her to his breast :—  
The wondering fair one turn'd to chide :  
'Twas Edwin's self that press'd !

'Turn, Angelina, ever dear ;  
My charmer, turn, to see  
Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,  
Restored to love and thee !

'Thus let me hold thee to my heart,  
And every care resign :  
And shall we never, never part,  
My life—my all that's mine ?

'No, never from this hour to part,  
We'll live and love so true ;  
The sigh, that rends thy constant heart,  
Shall break thy Edwin's too.'

While this ballad was reading, Sophia seemed to mix

an air of tenderness with her approbation. But our tranquillity was soon disturbed by the report of a gun just by us; and, immediately after, a man was seen bursting through the hedge, to take up the game he had killed: This sportsman was the squire's chaplain, who had shot one of the blackbirds that so agreeably entertained us. So loud a report, and so near, startled my daughters; and I could perceive that Sophia, in the fright, had thrown herself into Mr. Burchell's arms for protection. The gentleman came up, and asked pardon for having disturbed us, affirming that he was ignorant of our being so near: he therefore sat down by my youngest daughter, and, sportsman-like, offered her what he had killed that morning. She was going to refuse, but a private look from her mother soon induced her to correct the mistake, and accept his present, though with some reluctance. My wife, as usual, discovered her pride in a whisper; observing, that Sophy had made a conquest of the chaplain, as well as her sister had of the squire: I suspected, however, with more probability, that her affections were placed upon a different object. The chaplain's errand was to inform us, that Mr. Thornhill had provided music and refreshments, and intended that night giving the young ladies a ball by moonlight on the grass-plot before our door. 'Nor can I deny,' continued he, 'but I have an interest in being first to deliver this message, as I expect for my reward to be honoured with Miss Sophia's hand as a partner.' To this my girl replied, that she should have no objection, if she could do it with honour. 'But here,' continued she, 'is a gentleman,' looking at Mr. Burchell, 'who has been my companion in the task for the day, and it is fit he should share in its amusements.' Mr. Burchell returned her a compliment for her intentions, but resigned her up to the chaplain, adding, that he was to go that night five miles, being invited to a harvest-supper. His refusal appeared to me a little extraordinary; nor could I conceive how so sensible a girl as my youngest could thus prefer a man of broken fortunes to one whose expectations were much greater. But as men are most capable of distinguishing merit in women,

so the ladies often form the truest judgment of us. The two sexes seem placed as spies upon each other, and are furnished with different abilities, adapted for mutual inspection.

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CHAP. IX.—Two ladies of great distinction introduced—superior finery ever seems to confer superior breeding.

Mr. Burchell had scarcely taken leave, and Sophia consented to dance with the chaplain, when my little ones came running out to tell us, that the squire was come with a crowd of company. Upon our return, we found our landlord with a couple of under-gentlemen, and two young ladies richly dressed, whom he introduced as women of very great distinction and fashion from town. We happened not to have chairs enough for the whole company; but Mr. Thornhill immediately proposed that every gentleman should sit in a lady's lap. This I positively objected to, notwithstanding a look of disapprobation from my wife: Moses was therefore despatched to borrow a couple of chairs; and, as we were in want of ladies to make up a set of country-dancers, the two gentlemen went with him in quest of a couple of partners. Chairs and partners were soon provided. The gentlemen returned with my neighbour Flamborough's rosy daughters, flaunting with red top-knots. But an unlucky circumstance was not adverted to: though the Miss Flamboroughs were reckoned the very best dancers in the parish, and understood the jig and the roundabout to perfection, yet they were totally unacquainted with country-dances. This at first discomposed us; however, after a little shoving and dragging, they at last went merrily on. Our music consisted of two fiddles, with a pipe and tabor. The moon shone bright; Mr. Thornhill and my eldest daughter led up the ball, to the great delight of the spectators; for the neighbours, hearing what was going forward, came flocking about us. My girl moved with so much grace and vivacity, that my wife could not avoid discovering the pride of her heart, by assuring me, that

though the little chit did it so cleverly, all the steps were stolen from herself. The ladies of the town strove hard to be equally easy, but without success: they swam, sprawled, languished, and frisked; but all would not do: the gazers, indeed, owned that it was fine; but neighbour Flamborough observed, that Miss Livy's feet seemed as pat to the music as its echo. After the dance had continued about an hour, the two ladies, who were apprehensive of catching cold, moved to break up the ball. One of them, I thought, expressed her sentiments upon this occasion in a very coarse manner, when she observed, that, by the 'living jingo, she was all of a muck of sweat.' Upon our return to the house, we found a very elegant cold supper, which Mr. Thornhill had ordered to be brought with him. The conversation, at this time, was more reserved than before. The two ladies threw my girls quite into the shade; for they would talk of nothing but high life, and high-lived company; with other fashionable topics, such as pictures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses. 'Tis true, they once or twice mortified us sensibly by slipping out an oath; but that appeared to me as the surest symptom of their distinction, though I am since informed that swearing is perfectly unfashionable. Their finery, however, threw a veil over any grossness in their conversation. My daughters seemed to regard their superior accomplishments with envy; and whatever appeared amiss was ascribed to tip-top quality breeding. But the condescension of the ladies was still superior to their other accomplishments: one of them observed, that had Miss Olivia seen a little more of the world, it would greatly improve her; to which the other added, that a single winter in town would make her little Sophia quite another thing. My wife warmly assented to both, adding, that there was nothing she more ardently wished than to give her girls a single winter's polishing. To this I could not help replying, that their breeding was already superior to their fortune; and that greater refinement would only serve to make their poverty ridiculous, and give them a taste for pleasures they had no right to possess. 'And what pleasures,' cried Mr. Thornhill, 'do

they not deserve to possess, who have so much in their power to bestow? As for my part,' continued he, 'my fortune is pretty large; love, liberty, and pleasure, are my maxims; but, curse me, if a settlement of half my estate could give my charming Olivia pleasure, it should be hers, and the only favour I would ask in return would be to add myself to the benefit.' I was not such a stranger to the world as to be ignorant that this was the fashionable cant to disguise the insolence of the basest proposal; but I made an effort to suppress my resentment. 'Sir,' cried I, 'the family which you now condescend to favour with your company has been bred with as nice a sense of honour as you: any attempts to injure that may be attended with very dangerous consequences. Honour, sir, is our only possession at present, and of that last treasure we must be particularly careful.' I was soon sorry for the warmth with which I had spoken this, when the young gentleman, grasping my hand, swore he commended my spirit, though he disapproved my suspicions. 'As to your present hint,' continued he, 'I protest nothing was farther from my heart than such a thought. No, by all that's tempting, the virtue that will stand a regular siege was never to my taste; for all my amours are carried by a *coup de main*.'

The two ladies, who affected to be ignorant of the rest, seemed highly displeased with this last stroke of freedom; and began a very discreet and serious dialogue upon virtue: in this, my wife, the chaplain, and I soon joined; and the squire himself was at last brought to confess a sense of sorrow for his former excesses. We talked of the pleasures of temperance, and of the sunshine in the mind unpolluted with guilt. I was so well pleased, that my little ones were kept up beyond the usual time, to be edified by so much good conversation. Mr. Thornhill even went beyond me, and demanded if I had any objection to giving prayers. I joyfully embraced the proposal; and in this manner the night was passed in a most comfortable way, till at length the company began to think of returning. The ladies seemed very unwilling to part with my daughters, for whom they had conceived a

particular affection; and joined in a request to have the pleasure of their company home. The squire seconded the proposal, and my wife added her entreaties; the girls too looked upon me as if they wished to go. In this perplexity I made two or three excuses, which my daughters as readily removed; so that at last I was obliged to give a peremptory refusal, for which we had nothing but sullen looks and short answers the whole day ensuing.

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CHAP. X.—The family endeavours to cope with their betters—the miseries of the poor, when they attempt to appear above their circumstances.

I now began to find that all my long and painful lectures upon temperance, simplicity, and contentment, were entirely disregarded. The distinctions lately paid us by our betters awakened that pride which I had laid asleep, but not removed. Our windows again, as formerly, were filled with washes for the neck and face; the sun was dreaded as an enemy to the skin without doors, and the fire as a spoiler of the complexion within. My wife observed, that rising too early would hurt her daughters' eyes, that working after dinner would redden their noses, and she convinced me that the hands never looked so white as when they did nothing. Instead, therefore, of finishing George's shirts, we now had them new-modelling their old gauzes, or flourishing upon cat-gut. The poor Miss Flamboroughs, their former gay companions, were cast off as mean acquaintance; and the whole conversation now fell upon high life and high-lived company, with pictures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses.

But we could have borne all this, had not a fortune-telling gipsy come to raise us into perfect sublimity. The tawny sibyl no sooner appeared, than my girls came running to me for a shilling a-piece, to cross her hand with silver. To say the truth, I was tired of being always wise, and could not help gratifying their request,



because I loved to see them happy. I gave each of them a shilling; though, for the honour of the family, it must be observed, that they never went without money themselves, as my wife always generously let them have a guinea each, to keep in their pockets; but with strict injunctions never to change it. After they had been closeted up with the fortune-teller for some time, I knew by their looks, upon their returning, that they had been promised something great. 'Well, my girls, how have you sped? Tell me, Livy, has the fortune-teller given thee a pennyworth?'—'I protest, papa,' says the girl, 'I believe she deals with somebody that's not right; for she positively declared, that I am to be married to a squire in less than a twelvemonth.'—'Well, now, Sophy, my child,' said I, 'and what sort of a husband are you to have?'—'Sir,' replied she, 'I am to have a lord soon after my sister has married the squire.'—'How!' cried I, 'is that all you are to have for your two shillings? Only a lord and a squire for two shillings? You fools, I could have promised you a prince and a nabob for half the money.'

This curiosity of theirs, however, was attended with very serious effects: we now began to think ourselves designed by the stars to something exalted, and already anticipated our future grandeur.

It has been a thousand times observed, and I must observe it once more, that the hours we pass with happy prospects in view are more pleasing than those crowned with fruition: in the first case, we cook the dish to our own appetite; in the latter, nature cooks it for us. It is impossible to repeat the train of agreeable reveries we called up for our entertainment. We looked upon our fortunes as once more rising; and as the whole parish asserted that the squire was in love with my daughter, she was actually so with him; for they persuaded her into the passion. In this agreeable interval, my wife had the most lucky dreams in the world, which she took care to tell us every morning with great solemnity and exactness. It was one night a coffin and cross-bones, the sign of an approaching wedding; at another time she

imagined her daughter's pockets filled with farthings, a certain sign they would shortly be stuffed with gold. The girls themselves had their omens: they felt strange kisses on their lips; they saw rings in the candle; purses bounced from the fire; and true-love knots lurked in the bottom of every tea-cup.

Towards the end of the week, we received a card from the town ladies, in which, with their compliments, they hoped to see all our family at church the Sunday following. All Saturday morning I could perceive, in consequence of this, my wife and daughters in close conference together, and now and then glancing at me with looks that betrayed a latent plot. To be sincere, I had strong suspicions that some absurd proposal was preparing for appearing with splendor the next day. In the evening, they began their operations in a very regular manner, and my wife undertook to conduct the siege. After tea, when I seemed in spirits, she began thus: 'I fancy, Charles, my dear, we shall have a great deal of good company at our church to-morrow.'—'Perhaps we may, my dear,' returned I; 'though you need be under no uneasiness about that: you shall have a sermon, whether there be or not.'—'That is what I expect,' returned she; 'but I think, my dear, we ought to appear there as decently as possible, for who knows what may happen?'—'Your precautions,' replied I, 'are highly commendable. A decent behaviour and appearance at church is what charms me. We should be devout and humble, cheerful and serene.'—'Yes,' cried she, 'I know that: but I mean we should go there in as proper a manner as possible, not altogether like the scrubs about us.'—'You are quite right, my dear,' returned I; 'and I was going to make the very same proposal. The proper manner of going is, to go there as early as possible, to have time for meditation before the service begins.'—'Phoo, Charles,' interrupted she, 'all that is very true; but not what I would be at. I mean, we should go there genteelly. You know the church is two miles off; and I protest I don't like to see my daughters trudging up to their pew all blowzed and red with walking, and looking

for all the world as if they had been winners at a smock-race. Now, my dear, my proposal is this: there are our two plough-horses, the colt that has been in our family these nine years, and his companion Blackberry, that has scarce done an earthly thing for this month past; they are both grown fat and lazy: why should they not do something as well as we? And let me tell you, when Moses has trimmed them a little, they will cut a very tolerable figure.'

To this proposal I objected, that walking would be twenty times more genteel than such a paltry conveyance, as Blackberry was wall-eyed, and the colt wanted a tail; that they had never been broken to the rein, but had a hundred vicious tricks; and that we had but one saddle and pillion in the whole house. All these objections, however, were overruled; so that I was obliged to comply. The next morning I perceived them not a little busy in collecting such materials as might be necessary for the expedition; but, as I found it would be a business of time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading-desk for their arrival; but not finding them come as was expected, I was obliged to begin, and went through the service, not without some uneasiness at finding them absent. This was increased when all was finished, and no appearance of the family. I therefore walked back by the horse-way, which was five miles round, though the foot-way was but two; and when got about half-way home, perceived the procession marching slowly forward towards the church—my son, my wife, and the two little ones, exalted upon one horse, and my two daughters on the other. I demanded the cause of their delay; but I soon found by their looks they had met with a thousand misfortunes on the road. The horses had at first refused to move from the door, till Mr. Burchell was kind enough to beat them forward for about two hundred yards with his cudgel. Next the straps of my wife's pillion broke down, and they were obliged to stop to repair them before they could proceed. After that, one of the horses took it in his head to stand still,

and neither blows nor entreaties could prevail with him to proceed. It was just recovering from this dismal situation that I found them; but, perceiving every thing safe, I own their present mortification did not much displease me, as it would give me many opportunities of future triumph, and teach my daughters more humility.

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CHAP. XI.—The family still resolve to hold up their heads.

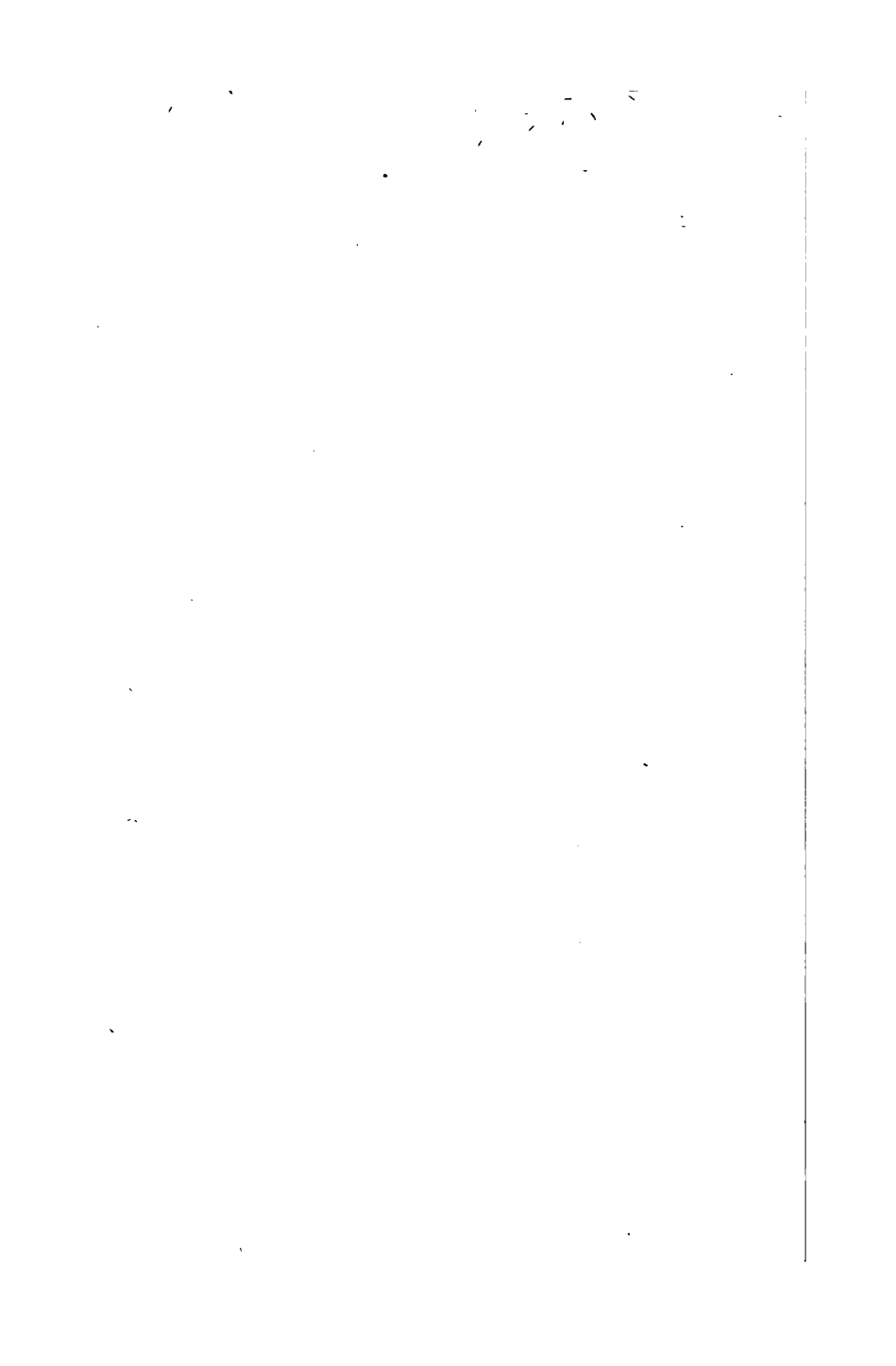
Michaelmas-eve happening on the next day, we were invited to burn nuts and play tricks at neighbour Flam-borough's. Our late mortifications had humbled us a little, or it is probable we might have rejected such an invitation with contempt: however, we suffered ourselves to be happy. Our honest neighbour's goose and dumplings were fine; and the lamb's wool, even in the opinion of my wife, who was a connoisseur, was excellent. It is true, his manner of telling stories was not quite so well: they were very long and very dull, and all about himself, and we had laughed at them ten times before: however, we were kind enough to laugh at them once more.

Mr. Burchell, who was of the party, was always fond of seeing some innocent amusement going forward, and set the boys and girls to blindman's buff: my wife too was persuaded to join in the diversion, and it gave me pleasure to think she was not yet too old. In the mean time, my neighbour and I looked on, laughed at every feat, and praised our own dexterity when we were young: hot cockles succeeded next, questions and commands followed that, and, last of all, they sat down to hunt the slipper. As every person may not be acquainted with this primeval pastime, it may be necessary to observe, that the company, in this play, plant themselves in a ring upon the ground, all except one, who stands in the middle, whose business it is to catch the shoe, which the company shove about under their hams from one to another, something like a weaver's shuttle. As it is im-

possible, in this case, for the lady who is up to face all the company at once, the great beauty of the play lies in hitting her a thump with the heel of the shoe on that side least capable of making defence. It was in this manner that my eldest daughter was hemmed in and thumped about, all blowzed, in spirits, and bawling for fair play with a voice that might deafen a ballad-singer, when, confusion on confusion ! who should enter the room, but our two great acquaintances from town, Lady Blarney, and Miss Carolina Wilelmina Amelia Skeggs ? Description would but beggar, therefore it is unnecessary to describe this new mortification. Death ! to be seen by ladies of such high breeding in such vulgar attitudes ! Nothing better could ensue from such a vulgar play of Mr. Flamborough's proposing. We seemed struck to the ground for some time, as if actually petrified with amazement.

The two ladies had been at our house to see us ; and, finding us from home, came after us hither, as they were uneasy 'to know what accident could have kept us from church the day before. Olivia undertook to be our prolocutor, and delivered the whole in a summary way, only saying,—' We were thrown from our horses.' At which account the ladies were greatly concerned ; but being told the family received no hurt, they were extremely glad ; but being informed that we were almost killed by the fright, they were vastly sorry ; but hearing that we had a very good night, they were extremely glad again. Nothing could exceed their complaisance to my daughters : their professions the last evening were warm, but now they were ardent. They protested a desire of more lasting acquaintance. Lady Blarney was particularly attached to Olivia ; Miss Carolina Wilelmina Amelia Skeggs (I love to give the whole name) took a greater fancy to her sister. They supported the conversation between themselves, while my daughters sat silent, admiring their exalted breeding. But as every reader, however beggarly himself, is fond of high-lived dialogues, with anecdotes of lords, ladies, and knights of the garter, I must beg leave to give him the concluding part of the present conversation.



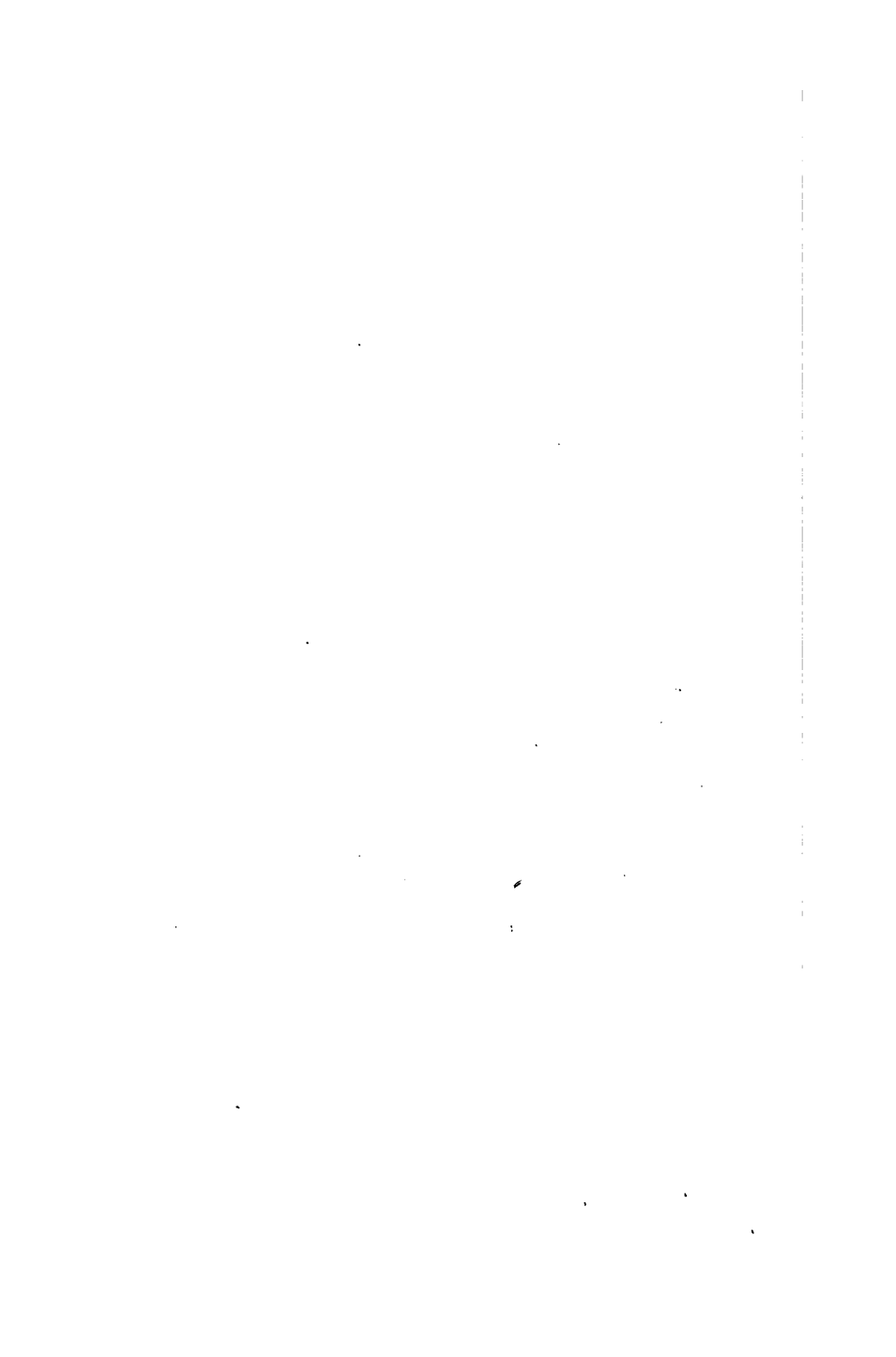




*The unexpected Visit of the fine Ladies.*

London, Printed for James Goddard & Co. 1832.





'All that I know of the matter,' cried Miss Skeggs, 'is this, that it may be true, or it may not be true: but this I can assure your ladyship, that the whole rout was in amaze; his lordship turned all manner of colours; my lady fell into a swoon; but sir Tomkyn, drawing his sword, swore he was hers to the last drop of his blood.'

'Well,' replied our peeress, 'this I can say, that the duchess never told me a syllable of the matter, and I believe her grace would keep nothing a secret from me. This you may depend on as a fact, that the next morning my lord duke cried out three times to his valet-de-chambre, Jernigan! Jernigan! Jernigan! bring me my garters.'

But previously I should have mentioned the very impolite behaviour of Mr. Burchell, who, during this discourse, sat with his face turned to the fire, and at the conclusion of every sentence would cry out Fudge! an expression, which displeased us all, and in some measure damped the rising spirit of the conversation.

'Besides, my dear Skeggs,' continued our peeress, 'there is nothing of this in the copy of verses that Dr. Burdock made upon the occasion.' Fudge!

'I am surprised at that,' cried Miss Skeggs; 'for he seldom leaves any thing out, as he writes only for his own amusement. But can your ladyship favour me with a sight of them?' Fudge!

'My dear creature,' replied our peeress, 'do you think I carry such things about me? Though they are very fine to be sure, and I think myself something of a judge; at least, I know what pleases myself. Indeed, I was ever an admirer of all Dr. Burdock's little pieces; for except what he does, and our dear countess at Hanover-square, there's nothing comes out but the most lowest stuff in nature; not a bit of high-life among them.' Fudge!

'Your ladyship should except,' says the other, 'your own things in the Lady's Magazine. I hope you'll say there's nothing low-lived there? But I suppose we are to have no more from that quarter?' Fudge.

'Why, my dear,' says the lady, 'you know my reader

and companion has left me to be married to captain Roach; and as my poor eyes won't suffer me to write myself, I have been for some time looking out for another. A proper person is no easy matter to find; and, to be sure, thirty pounds a year is a small stipend for a well-bred girl of character, that can read, write, and behave in company: as for the chits about town, there is no bearing them about one.' Fudge!

'That I know,' cried Miss Skeggs, 'by experience; for of the three companions I had this last half-year, one of them refused to do plain work an hour in the day; another thought twenty-five guineas a year too small a salary; and I was obliged to send away the third, because I suspected an intrigue with the chaplain. Virtue, my dear lady Blarney, virtue is worth any price; but where is that to be found?' Fudge!

My wife had been for a long time all attention to this discourse, but was particularly struck with the latter part of it. Thirty pounds, and twenty-five guineas a year, made fifty-six pounds five shillings English money; all which was in a manner going a-begging, and might easily be secured in the family. She for a moment studied my looks for approbation; and, to own a truth, I was of opinion, that two such places would fit our two daughters exactly. Besides, if the squire had any real affection for my eldest daughter, this would be the way to make her every way qualified for her fortune. My wife therefore was resolved that we should not be deprived of such advantages for want of assurance, and undertook to harangue for the family. 'I hope,' cried she, 'your ladyships will pardon my present presumption. It is true, we have no right to pretend to such favours, but yet it is natural for me to wish putting my children forward in the world; and I will be bold to say, my two girls have had a pretty good education, and capacity; at least, the country can't show better. They read, write, and cast accounts; they understand their needle, broad-stitch, cross and change, and all manner of plain work; they can pink, point, and frill, and know something of music; they

can do up small clothes, and work upon catgut; my eldest can cut paper, and my youngest has a very pretty manner of telling fortunes upon the cards.' Fudge!

When she had delivered this pretty piece of eloquence, the two ladies looked at each other a few minutes in silence, with an air of doubt and importance. At last, Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs condescended to observe, that the young ladies, from the opinion she could form of them from so slight an acquaintance, seemed very fit for such employments: 'but a thing of this kind, madam,' cried she, addressing my spouse, 'requires a thorough examination into characters, and a more perfect knowledge of each other. Not, madam,' continued she, 'that I in the least suspect the young ladies' virtue, prudence, and discretion: but there is a form in these things, madam; there is a form.' Fudge!

My wife approved her suspicions very much, observing, that she was very apt to be suspicious herself; but referred her to all the neighbours for a character: but this our peeress declined, as unnecessary, alleging that her cousin Thornhill's recommendation would be sufficient, and upon this we rested our petition.

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CHAP. XII.—Fortune seems resolved to humble the family of Wakefield—mortifications are often more painful than real calamities.

When we returned home, the night was dedicated to schemes of future conquest. Deborah exerted much sagacity in conjecturing which of the two girls was likely to have the best place, and most opportunities of seeing good company. The only obstacle to our preferment was in obtaining the squire's recommendation; but he had already shown us too many instances of his friendship to doubt of it now. Even in bed my wife kept up the usual theme: 'Well, faith, my dear Charles, between ourselves, I think we have made an excellent day's work of it.'—'Pretty well,' cried I, not knowing what to say. 'What, only pretty well?' returned she: 'I think it is

very well. Suppose the girls should come to make acquaintance of taste in town! This I am assured of, that London is the only place in the world for all manner of husbands. Besides, my dear, strange things happen every day; and as ladies of quality are so taken with my daughters, what will not men of quality be? *Entre nous*, I protest I like my lady Blarney vastly; so very obliging! However, Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs has my warm heart: but yet, when they came to talk of places in town, you saw at once how I nailed them. Tell me, my dear, don't you think I did for my children there?'—'Ay,' returned I, not knowing well what to think of the matter: 'Heaven grant they may be both the better for it this day three months!' This was one of those observations I made to impress my wife with an opinion of my sagacity; for if the girls succeeded, then it was a pious wish fulfilled; but if any thing unfortunate ensued, then it might be looked upon as a prophecy. All this conversation, however, was only preparatory to another scheme, and indeed I dreaded as much. This was nothing less, than, as we were now to hold up our heads a little higher in the world, it would be proper to sell the colt, which was grown old, at a neighbouring fair, and buy us a horse that would carry single or double upon an occasion, and make a pretty appearance at church, or upon a visit. This at first I opposed stoutly, but it was as stoutly defended. However, as I weakened, my antagonist gained strength, till at last it was resolved to part with him.

As the fair happened on the following day, I had intentions of going myself; but my wife persuaded me that I had got a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. 'No, my dear,' said she, 'our son Moses is a discreet boy, and can buy and sell to very good advantage: you know all our great bargains are of his purchasing. He always stands out, and higgles, and actually tires them till he gets a bargain.'

As I had some opinion of my son's prudence, I was willing enough to entrust him with this commission: and the next morning I perceived his sisters mighty busy in

fitting out Moses for the fair; trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet being over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the colt, with a deal-box before him to bring home groceries in. He had on a coat made of that cloth they call thunder and lightning, which, though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away: his waistcoat was of a gosling green; and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black ribbon. We all followed him several paces from the door, bawling after him, 'Good luck! good luck!' till we could see him no longer.

He was scarce gone, when Mr. Thornhill's butler came to congratulate us upon our good fortune, saying, that he overheard his young master mention our names with great commendation.

Good fortune seemed resolved not to come alone. Another footman from the same family followed, with a card for my daughters, importing, that the two ladies had received such pleasing accounts from Mr. Thornhill of us all, that, after a few previous inquiries, they hoped to be perfectly satisfied. 'Ay,' cried my wife, 'I now see it is no easy matter to get into the families of the great; but when one once gets in; then, as Moses says, one may go to sleep.' To this piece of humour, (for she intended it for wit) my daughters assented with a loud laugh of pleasure. In short, such was her satisfaction at this message, that she actually put her hand in her pocket, and gave the messenger seven-pence halfpenny.

This was to be our visiting day. The next that came was Mr. Burchell, who had been at the fair. He brought my little ones a pennyworth of gingerbread each, which my wife undertook to keep for them, and give them by letters at a time: he brought my daughters also a couple of boxes, in which they might keep wafers, snuff, patches, or even money, when they got it. My wife was usually fond of a weasel-skin purse, as being the most lucky; but this by the bye. We had still a regard for Mr. Burchell, though his late rude behaviour was in some measure displeasing; nor could we now avoid communica-

ting our happiness to him, and asking his advice: although we seldom followed advice, we were all ready enough to ask it. When he read the note from the two ladies, he shook his head, and observed that an affair of this sort demanded the utmost circumspection. This air of diffidence highly displeased my wife. 'I never doubted, sir,' cried she, 'your readiness to be against my daughters and me. You have more circumspection than is wanted. However, I fancy, when we come to ask advice, we shall apply to persons who seem to have made use of it themselves.'—'Whatever my own conduct may have been, madam,' replied he, 'is not the present question; though, as I have made no use of advice myself, I should in conscience give it to those that will.' As I was apprehensive this answer might draw on a repartee, making up by abuse what it wanted in wit, I changed the subject, by seeming to wonder what could keep our son so long at the fair, as it was now almost night-fall. 'Never mind our son,' cried my wife: 'depend upon it, he knows what he is about. I'll warrant we'll never see him sell his hen on a rainy day. I have seen him buy such bargains as would amaze one. I'll tell you a good story about that, that will make you split your sides with laughing. But, as I live, yonder comes Moses, without a horse, and the box at his back.'

As she spoke, Moses came slowly on foot, and sweating under the deal box, which he had strapped round his shoulders like a pedler. 'Welcome! welcome, Moses! well, my boy, what have you brought us from the fair?'—'I have brought you myself,' cried Moses, with a sly look, and resting the box on the dresser. 'Ay, Moses,' cried my wife, 'that we know; but where is the horse?'—'I have sold him,' cried Moses, 'for three pounds five shillings and two-pence.'—'Well done, my good boy,' returned she: 'I knew you would touch them off. Between ourselves, three pounds five shillings and two-pence is no bad day's work. Come, let us have it, then.'—'I have brought back no money,' cried Moses again: 'I have laid it all out in a bargain, and here it is,' pulling out a bundle from his breast: 'here they are; a gross



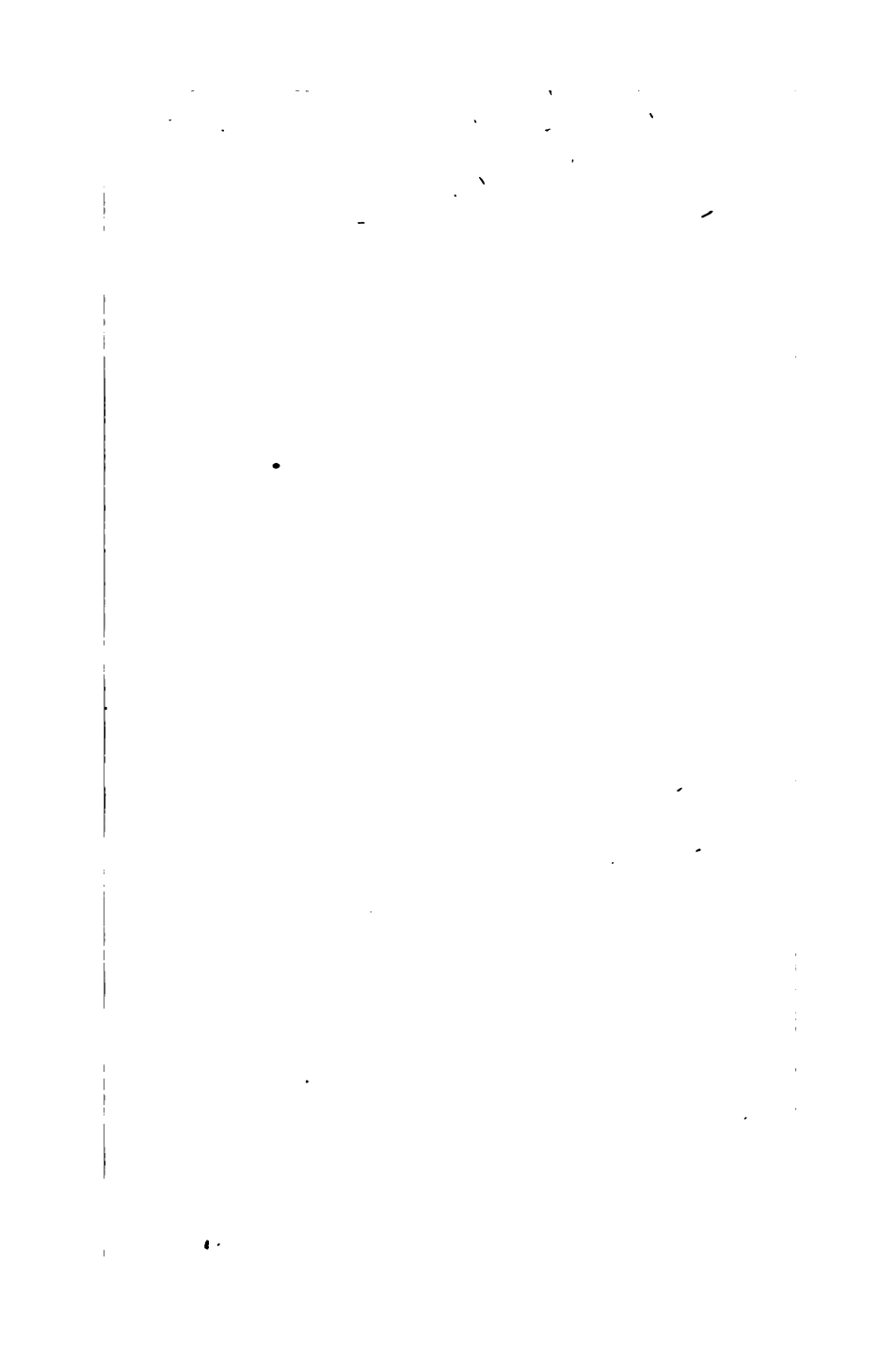


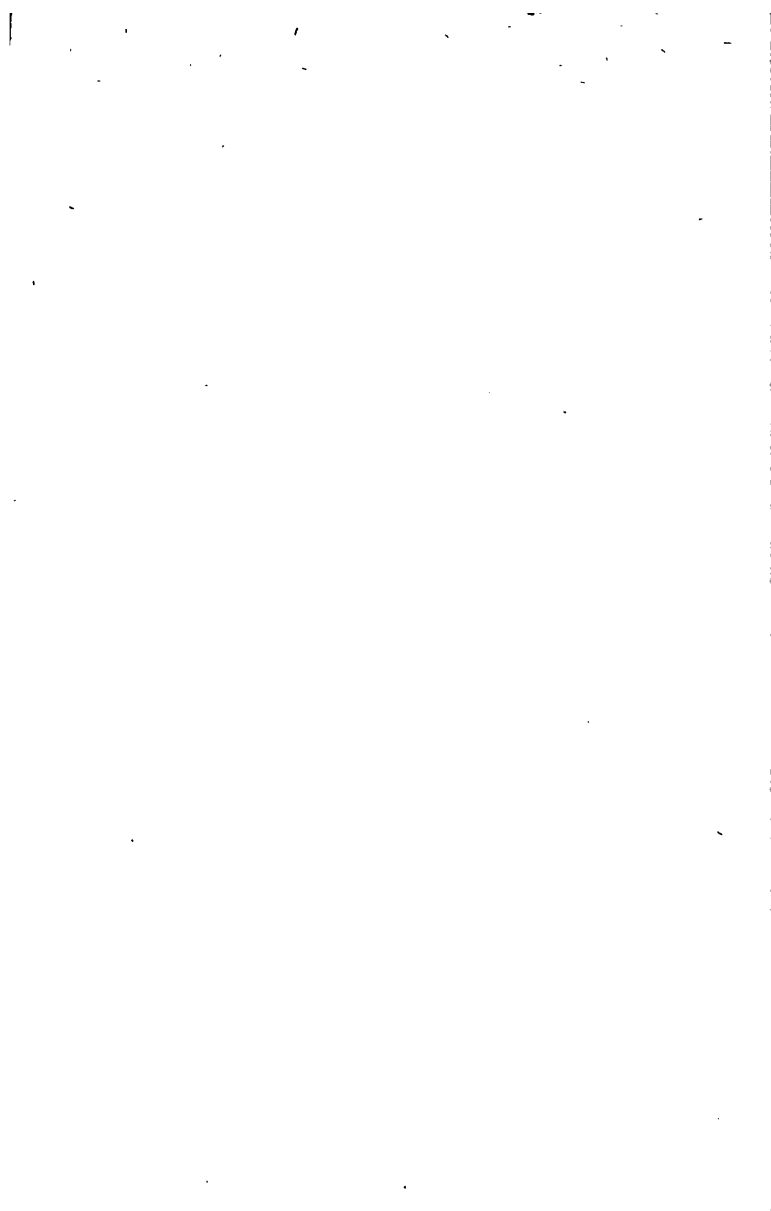


George Cruikshank

## *The Gros of Green Spectacles.*

*London, Printed for James Cochrane & Co. 1832.*





of green spectacles, with silver rims and shagreen cases.'—'A gross of green spectacles!' repeated my wife, in a faint voice: 'and you have parted with the colt, and brought us back nothing but a gross of green paltry spectacles!'—'Dear mother,' cried the boy, 'why won't you listen to reason? I had them a dead bargain, or I should not have bought them. The silver rims alone will sell for double the money.'—'A fig for the silver rims!' cried my wife, in a passion: 'I dare swear they won't sell for above half the money at the rate of broken silver, five shillings an ounce.'—'You need be under no uneasiness,' cried I, 'about selling the rims, for they are not worth sixpence; for I perceive they are only copper, varnished over.'—'What!' cried my wife, 'not silver? the rims not silver?'—'No,' cried I, 'no more silver than your saucepan.'—'And so,' returned she, 'we have parted with the colt, and have only got a gross of green spectacles, with copper rims and shagreen cases! A murrain take such trumpery! the blockhead has been imposed upon, and should have known his company better.'—'There, my dear,' cried I, 'you are wrong; he should not have known them at all.'—'Marry, hang the idiot!' returned she, 'to bring me such stuff; if I had them, I would throw them on the fire.'—'There again you are wrong, my dear,' cried I; 'for though they be copper, we will keep them by us; as copper spectacles, you know, are better than nothing.'

By this time the unfortunate Moses was undeceived. He now saw that he had indeed been imposed upon by a prowling sharper, who, observing his figure, had marked him for an easy prey. I therefore asked him the circumstances of his deception. He sold the horse, it seems, and walked the fair in search of another. A reverend-looking man brought him to a tent, under pretence of having one to sell. 'Here,' continued Moses, 'we met another man very well dressed, who desired to borrow twenty pounds upon these, saying that he wanted money; and would dispose of them for a third of the value. The first gentleman, who pretended to be my friend, whis-

pered me to buy them, and cautioned me not to let so good an offer pass. I sent for Mr. Flamborough, and they talked him up as finely as they did me ; and so, at last, we were persuaded to buy the two gross between us.'

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CHAP. XIII.—Mr. Burchell is found to be an enemy ; for he has the confidence to give disagreeable advice.

Our family had now made several attempts to be fine ; but some unforeseen disaster demolished each as soon as projected. I endeavoured to take the advantage of every disappointment to improve their good sense, in proportion as they were frustrated in ambition. ' You see, my children,' cried I, ' how little is to be got by attempts to impose upon the world, in coping with our betters : such as are poor, and will associate with none but the rich, are hated by those they avoid, and despised by those they follow. Unequal combinations are always disadvantageous to the weaker side ; the rich having the pleasure, and the poor the inconveniences, that result from them. But come, Dick, my boy, and repeat the fable you were reading to-day, for the good of the company.'

' Once upon a time,' cried the child, ' a giant and a dwarf were friends, and kept together. They made a bargain that they never would forsake each other, but go seek adventures. The first battle they fought was with two Saracens ; and the dwarf, who was very courageous, dealt one of the champions a most angry blow : it did the Saracen but very little injury, who, lifting up his sword, fairly struck off the poor dwarf's arm. He was now in a woful plight ; but the giant, coming to his assistance, in a short time left the two Saracens dead on the plain, and the dwarf cut off the dead man's head out of spite. They then travelled on to another adventure : this was against three bloody-minded satyrs, who were carrying away a damsel in distress. The dwarf was not quite so fierce now as before ; but for all that struck the first blow, which was returned by another that

knocked out his eye; but the giant was soon up with them, and, had they not fled, would certainly have killed them every one. They were all very joyful for this victory, and the damsel who was relieved fell in love with the giant, and married him. They now travelled far, and farther than I can tell, till they met with a company of robbers: the giant, for the first time, was foremost now; but the dwarf was not far behind. The battle was stout and long: wherever the giant came, all fell before him; but the dwarf had like to have been killed more than once. At last the victory declared for the two adventurers; but the dwarf lost his leg. The dwarf had now lost an arm, a leg, and an eye, while the giant was without a single wound: upon which, he cried out to his little companion, My little hero, this is glorious sport; let us get one victory more, then we shall have honour for ever.—No, cries the dwarf, who by this time was grown wiser; no, I declare off; I'll fight no more: for I find, in every battle, that you get all the honour and rewards, but all the blows fall upon me.'

I was going to moralize upon this fable, when our attention was called off to a warm dispute between my wife and Mr. Burchell, upon my daughters' intended expedition to town. My wife very strenuously insisted upon the advantages that would result from it; Mr. Burchell, on the contrary, dissuaded her with great ardour; and I stood neuter. His present dissuasions seemed but the second part of those which were received with so ill a grace in the morning. The dispute grew high; while poor Deborah, instead of reasoning stronger, talked louder, and at last was obliged to take shelter from a defeat in clamour. The conclusion of her harangue, however, was highly displeasing to us all: she knew, she said, of some, who had their secret reasons for what they advised; but, for her part, she wished such to stay away from her house for the future. 'Madam,' cried Burchell, with looks of great composure, which tended to inflame her the more, 'as for secret reasons, you are right; I have secret reasons, which I forbear to mention, because you are not able to answer those, of which I make no secret; but I

find my visits here are become troublesome : I'll take my leave therefore now, and perhaps come once more to take a final farewell when I am quitting the country.' Thus saying, he took up his hat ; nor could the attempts of Sophia, whose looks seemed to upbraid his precipitancy, prevent his going.

When gone, we all regarded each other for some minutes with confusion. My wife, who knew herself to be the cause, strove to hide her concern with a forced smile, and an air of assurance, which I was willing to reprove : 'How, woman !' cried I to her, 'is it thus we treat strangers ? Is it thus we return their kindness ? Be assured, my dear, that these were the harshest words, and to me the most displeasing, that ever escaped your lips !' — 'Why would he provoke me then ?' replied she : 'but I know the motives of his advice perfectly well. He would prevent my girls from going to town, that he may have the pleasure of my youngest daughter's company here at home ; but, whatever happens, she shall choose better company than such low-lived fellows as he.' — 'Low-lived, my dear, do you call him ?' cried I : 'it is very possible we may mistake this man's character ; for he seems, upon some occasions, the most finished gentleman I ever knew. Tell me, Sophia, my girl, has he ever given you any secret instances of his attachment ?' — 'His conversation with me, sir,' replied my daughter, 'has ever been sensible, modest, and pleasing. As to aught else ; no, never. Once, indeed, I remember to have heard him say, he never knew a woman, who could find merit in a man that seemed poor.' — 'Such, my dear,' cried I, 'is the common cant of all the unfortunate or idle ; but I hope you have been taught to judge properly of such men, and that it would be even madness to expect happiness from one who has been so very bad an economist of his own. Your mother and I have now better prospects for you. The next winter, which you will probably spend in town, will give you opportunities of making a more prudent choice.'

What Sophia's reflections were upon this occasion I cannot pretend to determine : but I was not displeased, at

the bottom, that we were rid of a guest, from whom I had much to fear. Our breach of hospitality went to my conscience a little; but I quickly silenced that monitor by two or three specious reasons, which served to satisfy and reconcile me to myself. The pain which conscience gives the man who has already done wrong is soon got over. Conscience is a coward; and those faults it has not strength to prevent, it seldom has justice enough to accuse.

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CHAP. XIV.—Fresh mortifications, or a demonstration that seeming calamities may be real blessings.

The journey of my daughters to town was now resolved upon, Mr. Thornhill having kindly promised to inspect their conduct himself, and inform us by letter of their behaviour: but it was thought indispensably necessary that their appearance should equal the greatness of their expectations, which could not be done without expense. We debated, therefore, in full council, what were the easiest methods of raising money; or, more properly speaking, what we could most conveniently sell. The deliberation was soon finished: it was found that our remaining horse was utterly useless for the plough, without his companion; and equally unfit for the road, as wanting an eye: it was therefore determined, that we should dispose of him, for the purpose above-mentioned, at the neighbouring fair; and, to prevent imposition, that I should go with him myself. Though this was one of the first mercantile transactions of my life, yet I had no doubt of acquitting myself with reputation. The opinion a man forms of his own prudence is measured by that of the company he keeps; and as mine was mostly in the family way, I had conceived no unfavourable sentiments of my worldly wisdom. My wife, however, next morning, at parting, after I had got some paces from the door, called me back, to advise me, in a whisper, to have all my eyes about me.

I had, in the usual forms, when I came to the fair, put



my horse through all his paces, but for some time had no bidders. At last, a chapman approached, and after he had for a good while examined the horse round, finding him blind of one eye, he would have nothing to say to him; a second came up, but observing he had a spavin, declared he would not take him for the driving home; a third perceived he had a windgall, and would bid no money; a fourth knew by his eye that he had the bots; a fifth wondered what a plague I could do at the fair with a blind, spavined, galled hack, that was only fit to be cut up for a dog-kennel. By this time I began to have a most hearty contempt for the poor animal myself, and was almost ashamed at the approach of every customer; for though I did not entirely believe all the fellows told me, yet I reflected that the number of witnesses was a strong presumption they were right; and St. Gregory, upon Good Works, professes himself to be of the same opinion.

I was in this mortifying situation, when a brother clergyman, and old acquaintance, who had also business at the fair, came up, and, shaking me by the hand, proposed adjourning to a public-house, and taking a glass of whatever we could get. I readily closed with the offer; and, entering an alehouse, we were shown into a little back room, where there was only a venerable old man, who sat wholly intent over a large book, which he was reading. I never in my life saw a figure that prepossessed me more favourably: his locks of silver gray venerably shaded his temples, and his green old age seemed to be the result of health and benevolence. However, his presence did not interrupt our conversation: my friend and I discoursed on the various turns of fortune we had met; the Whistonian controversy, my last pamphlet, the archdeacon's reply, and the hard measure that was dealt me. But our attention was in a short time taken off, by the appearance of a youth, who, entering the room, respectfully said something softly to the old stranger. 'Make no apologies, my child,' said the old man: 'to do good is a duty we owe to all our fellow-creatures: take this; I wish it were more; but five pounds

will relieve your distress, and you are welcome.' The modest youth shed tears of gratitude, and yet his gratitude was scarcely equal to mine. I could have hugged the good old man in my arms, his benevolence pleased me so. He continued to read, and we resumed our conversation, until my companion, after some time, recollecting that he had business to transact in the fair, promised to be soon back; adding, that he always desired to have as much of Dr. Primrose's company as possible. The old gentleman, hearing my name mentioned, seemed to look at me with attention for some time; and when my friend was gone, most respectfully demanded if I was any way related to the great Primrose, that courageous monogamist, who had been the bulwark of the church. Never did my heart feel sincerer rapture than at that moment. 'Sir,' cried I, 'the applause of so good a man, as I am sure you are, adds to that happiness in my breast which your benevolence has already excited. You behold before you, sir, that Dr. Primrose, the monogamist, whom you have been pleased to call great. You here see that unfortunate divine, who has so long, and it would ill become me to say successfully, fought against the deuterogamy of the age.'—'Sir,' cried the stranger, struck with awe, 'I fear I have been too familiar; but you'll forgive my curiosity, sir: I beg pardon.'—'Sir,' cried I, grasping his hand, 'you are so far from displeasing me by your familiarity, that I must beg you'll accept my friendship, as you already have my esteem.'—'Then with gratitude I accept the offer,' cried he, squeezing me by the hand, 'thou glorious pillar of unshaken orthodoxy; and do I behold——' I here interrupted what he was going to say; for though, as an author, I could digest no small share of flattery, yet now my modesty would permit no more. However, no lovers in romance ever cemented a more instantaneous friendship. We talked upon several subjects. At first, I thought him rather devout than learned, and began to think he despised all human doctrines as dross; yet this no way lessened him in my esteem; for I had for some time begun privately to harbour such an opinion myself. I

therefore took an occasion to observe, that the world in general began to be blameably indifferent as to doctrinal matters, and followed human speculations too much. 'Ay, sir,' replied he, as if he had reserved all his learning to that moment: 'ay, sir, the world is in its dotage; and yet the cosmogony, or creation of the world, has puzzled philosophers of all ages. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world? Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words: *Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to pan*, which imply that all things have neither beginning nor end: Manetho also, who lived about the time of Nebuchadon-Asser, Asser being a Syriac word, usually applied as a surname to the kings of that country, as Teglath-Phael-Asser, Nabon-Asser;—he, I say, formed a conjecture equally absurd; for as we usually say, *ek to biblion kubernetes*, which implies that books will never teach the world; so he attempted to investigate—— But, sir, I ask pardon: I am straying from the question.' That he actually was; nor could I for my life see how the creation of the world had any thing to do with the business I was talking of; but it was sufficient to show me that he was a man of letters, and I now revered him the more. I was resolved therefore to bring him to the touchstone; but he was too mild and too gentle to contend for victory. Whenever I made any observation that looked like a challenge to controversy, he would smile, shake his head, and say nothing; by which I understood he could say much if he thought proper. The subject, therefore, insensibly changed from the business of antiquity to that which brought us to the fair; mine, I told him, was to sell a horse; and, very luckily indeed, his was to buy one for one of his tenants. My horse was soon produced, and in fine we struck a bargain. Nothing now remained but to pay me, and he accordingly pulled out a thirty pound note, and bid me change it. Not being in a capacity of complying with his demand, he ordered his footman to be called up, who made his appearance in a very genteel livery. 'Here, Abraham,' cried he, 'go,

and get gold for this; you'll do it at neighbour Jackson's, or any where.' While the fellow was gone, he entertained me with a pathetic harangue on the great scarcity of silver, which I undertook to improve, by deploring also the great scarcity of gold; so that, by the time Abraham returned, we had both agreed that money was never so hard to be come at as now. Abraham returned to inform us, that he had been over the whole fair, and could not get change, though he had offered half-a-crown for doing it. This was a very great disappointment to us all; but the old gentleman, having paused a little, asked me if I knew one Solomon Flamborough in my part of the country: upon replying that he was my next-door neighbour, 'If that be the case then,' returned he, 'I believe we shall deal: you shall have a draft upon him payable at sight; and, let me tell you, he is as warm a man as any within five miles round him. Honest Solomon and I have been acquainted for many years together. I remember I always beat him at three jumps; but he could hop upon one leg farther than I.' A draft upon my neighbour was to me the same as money; for I was sufficiently convinced of his ability: the draft was signed, and put into my hands; and Mr. Jenkinson, the old gentleman, his man Abraham, and my horse, old Blackberry, trotted off very well pleased with each other.

After a short interval, being left to reflection, I began to recollect that I had done wrong in taking a draft from a stranger, and so prudently resolved upon following the purchaser, and having back my horse: but this was now too late; I therefore made directly homewards, resolving to get the draft changed into money at my friend's as fast as possible. I found my honest neighbour smoking his pipe at his own door; and, informing him that I had a small bill upon him, he read it twice over. 'You can read the name, I suppose,' cried I, 'Ephraim Jenkinson?'—'Yes,' returned he: 'the name is written plain enough; and I know the gentleman too—the greatest rascal under the canopy of heaven. This is the very same rogue who sold us the spectacles. Was he not a venerable-looking man, with gray hair, and no flaps to his pocket-holes?

And did he not talk a long string of learning about Greek, cosmogony, and the world?' To this I replied with a groan. 'Ay,' continued he, 'he has but that one piece of learning in the world, and he always talks it wherever he finds a scholar in company: but I know the rogue, and will catch him yet.'

Though I was already sufficiently mortified, my greatest struggle was to come, in facing my wife and daughters. No truant was ever more afraid of returning to school, there to behold the master's visage, than I was of going home. I was determined, however, to anticipate their fury, by first falling into a passion myself.

But, alas! upon entering, I found the family no way disposed for battle. My wife and girls were all in tears, Mr. Thornhill having been there that day, to inform them that their journey to town was entirely over. The two ladies, having heard reports of us from some malicious person about us, were that day set out for London. He could neither discover the tendency, nor the author of these; but whatever they might be, or whoever might have broached them, he continued to assure our family of his friendship and protection. I found, therefore, that they bore my disappointment with great resignation, as it was eclipsed in the greatness of their own. But what perplexed us most, was to think who could be so base as to asperse the character of a family so harmless as ours; too humble to excite envy, and too inoffensive to create disgust.

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CHAP. XV.—All Mr. Burchell's villany at once detected—the folly of being over-wise.

That evening, and part of the following day, was employed in fruitless attempts to discover our enemies: scarce a family in the neighbourhood but incurred our suspicions, and each of us had reasons for our opinion best known to ourselves. As we were in this perplexity, one of our little boys, who had been playing abroad, brought in a letter-case, which he found on the green. It was quickly known to belong to Mr. Burchell, with

whom it had been seen ; and, upon examination, contained some hints upon different subjects ; but what particularly engaged our attention was a sealed note, superscribed, ‘ The copy of a letter to be sent to the ladies at Thornhill Castle.’ It instantly occurred, that he was the base informer ; and we deliberated whether the note should not be broken open. I was against it ; but Sophia, who said she was sure that of all men he would be the last to be guilty of so much baseness, insisted upon its being read. In this she was seconded by the rest of the family ; and, at their joint solicitation, I read as follows :—

‘ Ladies,

‘ The bearer will sufficiently satisfy you as to the person from whom this comes ; one, at least, the friend of innocence, and ready to prevent its being seduced. I am informed, for a truth, that you have some intention of bringing two young ladies to town, whom I have some knowledge of, under the character of companions. As I would neither have simplicity imposed upon, nor virtue contaminated, I must offer it as my opinion that the impropriety of such a step will be attended with dangerous consequences. It has never been my way to treat the infamous or the lewd with severity ; nor should I now have taken this method of explaining myself, or reproving folly, did it not aim at guilt. Take, therefore, the admonition of a friend, and seriously reflect on the consequences of introducing infamy and vice into retreats where peace and innocence have hitherto resided.’

Our doubts were now at an end. There seemed indeed something applicable to both sides in this letter, and its censures might as well be referred to those to whom it was written as to us ; but the malicious meaning was obvious, and we went no farther. My wife had scarce patience to hear me to the end, but railed at the writer with unrestrained resentment : Olivia was equally severe, and Sophia seemed perfectly amazed at his baseness. As for my part, it appeared to me one of the vilest instances of unprovoked ingratitude I had ever met with ; nor could I account for it in any other manner, than by imputing it to his desire of detaining my youngest daughter in the country, to have the more frequent opportunities of an interview. In this manner we all sat ruminating upon schemes of vengeance, when our

other little boy came running in to tell us, that Mr. Burchell was approaching at the other end of the field. It is easier to conceive than describe the complicated sensations which are felt from the pain of a recent injury, and the pleasure of approaching vengeance. Though our intentions were only to upbraid him with his ingratitude, yet it was resolved to do it in a manner that would be perfectly cutting. For this purpose, we agreed to meet him with our usual smiles; to chat in the beginning with more than ordinary kindness, to amuse him a little; and then, in the midst of the flattering calm, to burst upon him like an earthquake, and overwhelm him with the sense of his own baseness. This being resolved upon, my wife undertook to manage the business herself, as she really had some talents for such an undertaking. We saw him approach: he entered, drew a chair, and sat down. 'A fine day, Mr. Burchell.'—'A very fine day, doctor; though I fancy we shall have some rain, by the shooting of my corns.'—'The shooting of your horns,' cried my wife, in a loud fit of laughter, and then asked pardon for being fond of a joke. 'Dear madam,' replied he, 'I pardon you with all my heart; for I protest I should not have thought it a joke, had you not told me.'—'Perhaps not, sir,' cried my wife, winking at us; 'and yet I dare say you can tell us how many jokes go to an ounce.'—'I fancy, madam,' returned Burchell, 'you have been reading a jest-book this morning, that ounce of jokes is so very good a conceit; and yet, madam, I had rather see half an ounce of understanding.'—'I believe you might,' cried my wife, still smiling at us, though the laugh was against her: 'and yet I have seen some men pretend to understanding, that have very little.'—'And, no doubt,' replied her antagonist, 'you have known ladies set up for wits, that had none.' I quickly began to find, that my wife was likely to gain but little at this business; so I resolved to treat him in a style of more severity myself. 'Both wit and understanding,' cried I, 'are trifles, without integrity; it is that which gives value to every character: the ignorant peasant,

without fault, is greater than the philosopher with many ; for what is genius or courage without a heart ?

An honest man 's the noblest work of God.'

' I always held that hackneyed maxim of Pope,' returned Mr. Burchell, ' as very unworthy a man of genius, and a base desertion of his own superiority. As the reputation of books is raised, not by their freedom from defect, but the greatness of their beauties ; so should that of men be prized, not from their exemption from fault, but the size of those virtues they are possessed of. The scholar may want prudence, the statesman may have pride, and the champion ferocity ; but shall we prefer to these the low mechanic, who laboriously plods on through life without censure or applause ? We might as well prefer the tame, correct paintings of the Flemish school, to the erroneous, but sublime animations of the Roman pencil.'

' Sir,' replied I, ' your present observation is just, when there are shining virtues and minute defects ; but when it appears that great vices are opposed in the same mind to as extraordinary virtues, such a character deserves contempt.'

' Perhaps,' cried he, ' there may be some such monsters as you describe, of great vices joined to great virtues ; yet, in my progress through life, I never yet found one instance of their existence : on the contrary, I have ever perceived, that where the mind was capacious, the affections were good. And indeed Providence seems kindly our friend in this particular, thus to debilitate the understanding where the heart is corrupt, and diminish the power where there is the will to do mischief. This rule seems to extend even to other animals : the little vermin race are ever treacherous, cruel, and cowardly ; whilst those endowed with strength and power are generous, brave, and gentle.'

' These observations sound well,' returned I ; ' and yet it would be easy this moment to point out a man,' and I fixed my eye steadfastly upon him, ' whose head and heart form a most detestable contrast. Ay, sir,' conti-



nued I, raising my voice, 'and I am glad to have this opportunity of detecting him in the midst of his fancied security. Do you know this, sir—this pocket-book?'—'Yes, sir,' returned he, with a face of impenetrable assurance; 'that pocket-book is mine, and I am glad you have found it.'—'And do you know,' cried I, 'this letter? Nay, never falter, man; but look me full in the face: I say, do you know this letter?'—'That letter?' replied he; 'yes, it was I that wrote that letter.'—'And how could you,' said I, 'so basely, so ungratefully, presume to write this letter?'—'And how came you,' replied he, with looks of unparalleled effrontery, 'so basely to presume to break open this letter? Don't you know, now, I could hang you all for this? All that I have to do, is to swear at the next justice's that you have been guilty of breaking open the lock of my pocket-book, and so hang you all up at this door.' This piece of unexpected insolence raised me to such a pitch, that I could scarce govern my passion. 'Ungrateful wretch! be gone, and no longer pollute my dwelling with thy baseness. Be gone, and never let me see thee again: go from my door; and the only punishment I wish thee, is an alarmed conscience, which will be a sufficient tormentor!' So saying, I threw him his pocket-book, which he took up with a smile; and, shutting the clasps with the utmost composure, left us quite astonished at the serenity of his assurance. My wife was particularly enraged that nothing could make him angry, or make him seem ashamed of his villanies. 'My dear,' cried I, willing to calm those passions that had been raised too high among us, 'we are not to be surprised that bad men want shame: they only blush at being detected in doing good, but glory in their vices.

'Guilt and Shame,' says the allegory, 'were at first companions, and in the beginning of their journey inseparably kept together: but their union was soon found to be disagreeable and inconvenient to both: Guilt gave Shame frequent uneasiness, and Shame often betrayed the secret conspiracies of Guilt. After long disagreement, therefore, they at length consented to part for ever.

Guilt boldly walked forward alone, to overtake Fate, that went before in the shape of an executioner; but Shame, being naturally timorous, returned back to keep company with Virtue, which, in the beginning of their journey, they had left behind. Thus, my children, after men have travelled through a few stages in vice, shame forsakes them, and returns back to wait upon the few virtues they have still remaining.'

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CHAP. XVI.—The family use art, which is opposed by still greater.

Whatever might have been Sophia's sensations, the rest of the family were easily consoled for Mr. Burchell's absence, by the company of our landlord, whose visits now became more frequent and longer. Though he had been disappointed in procuring my daughters the amusements of the town, as he designed, he took every opportunity of supplying them with those little recreations which our retirement would admit of. He usually came in the morning; and, while my son and I followed our occupations abroad, he sat with the family at home, and amused them by describing the town, with every part of which he was particularly acquainted: he could repeat all the observations that were retailed in the atmosphere of the play-houses, and had all the good things of the high wits by rote, long before they made their way into the jest-books. The intervals between conversation were employed in teaching my daughters piquet; or, sometimes, in setting my two little ones to box, to make them sharp, as he called it: but the hopes of having him for a son-in-law in some measure blinded us to all his imperfections. It must be owned, that my wife laid a thousand schemes to entrap him; or, to speak it more tenderly, used every art to magnify the merit of her daughter. If the cakes at tea eat short and crisp, they were made by Olivia; if the gooseberry-wine was well knit, the gooseberries were of her gathering; it was her fingers which gave the pickles their peculiar green; and in the compo-

sition of a pudding, it was her judgment that mixed the ingredients. Then the poor woman would sometimes tell the squire, that she thought him and Olivia extremely of a size, and would bid both stand up to see which was the tallest. These instances of cunning, which she thought impenetrable, yet which every body saw through, were very pleasing to our benefactor, who gave every day some new proofs of his passion, which, though they had not arisen to proposals of marriage, yet we thought fell but little short of it; and his slowness was sometimes attributed to native bashfulness, and sometimes to his fear of offending his uncle. An occurrence, however, which happened soon after, put it beyond a doubt, that he designed to become one of our family: my wife even regarded it as an absolute promise.

My wife and daughters, happening to return a visit at neighbour Flamborough's, found that family had lately got their pictures drawn by a limner, who travelled the country, and took likenesses for fifteen shillings a head. As this family and ours had long a sort of rivalry in point of taste, our spirit took the alarm at this stolen march upon us; and, notwithstanding all I could say, (and I said much) it was resolved that we should have our pictures done too. Having, therefore, engaged the limner, (for what could I do?) our next deliberation was to show the superiority of our taste in the attitudes. As for our neighbour's family, there were seven of them; and they were drawn with seven oranges—a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world. We desired to have something in a brighter style; and, after many debates, at length came to a unanimous resolution of being drawn together in one large historical family-piece: this would be cheaper, since one frame would serve for all; and it would be infinitely more genteel, for all families of any taste were now drawn in the same manner. As we did not immediately recollect an historical subject to hit us, we were contented each with being drawn as independent historical figures. My wife desired to be represented as Venus, and the painter was requested not to be too frugal of his diamonds in her sto-

macher and hair: her two little ones were to be as Cupids by her side; while I, in my gown and band, was to present her with my books on the Whistonian controversy. Olivia would be drawn as an Amazon, sitting upon a bank of flowers, dressed in a green joseph, richly laced with gold, and a whip in her hand; Sophia was to be a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter could put in for nothing; and Moses was to be dressed out with a hat and white feather.

Our taste so much pleased the squire, that he insisted on being put in as one of the family, in the character of Alexander the Great, at Olivia's feet. This was considered by us all as an indication of his desire to be introduced into the family, nor could we refuse his request. The painter was therefore set to work; and, as he wrought with assiduity and expedition, in less than four days the whole was completed. The piece was large, and it must be owned he did not spare his colours; for which my wife gave him great encomiums. We were all perfectly satisfied with his performance; but an unfortunate circumstance, which had not occurred till the picture was finished, now struck us with dismay. It was so very large, that we had no place in the house where to fix it: how we all came to disregard so material a point is inconceivable; but certain it is, we had all been greatly remiss. This picture, therefore, instead of gratifying our vanity, as we hoped, leaned in a most mortifying manner against the kitchen wall, where the canvas was stretched and painted, much too large to be got through any of the doors, and the jest of all our neighbours. One compared it to Robinson Crusoe's long-boat, too large to be removed; another thought it more resembled a reel in a bottle: some wondered how it could be got out; but still more were amazed how it ever got in.

But though it excited the ridicule of some, it effectually raised more malicious suggestions in many. The squire's portrait, being found united with ours, was an honour too great to escape envy. Scandalous whispers began to circulate at our expense, and our tranquillity was continually disturbed by persons who came as friends to

tell us what was said of us by enemies. These reports were always resented with becoming spirit ; but scandal ever improves by opposition.

We once again, therefore, entered into consultation upon obviating the malice of our enemies, and at last came to a resolution, which had too much cunning to give me entire satisfaction. It was this : as our principal object was to discover the honour of Mr. Thornhill's addresses, my wife undertook to sound him, by pretending to ask his advice in the choice of a husband for her eldest daughter : if this was not found sufficient to induce him to a declaration, it was then resolved to terrify him with a rival. To this last step, however, I would by no means give my consent, till Olivia gave me the most solemn assurances that she would marry the person provided to rival him upon this occasion, if he did not prevent it by taking her himself. Such was the scheme laid, which, though I did not strenuously oppose, I did not entirely approve.

The next time, therefore, that Mr. Thornhill came to see us, my girls took care to be out of the way, in order to give their mamma an opportunity of putting her scheme in execution : but they only retired to the next room, from whence they could overhear the whole conversation. My wife artfully introduced it by observing, that one of the Miss Flamboroughs was likely to have a very good match of it in Mr. Spanker. To this the squire assenting, she proceeded to remark, that they who had warm fortunes were always sure of getting good husbands : ' But Heaven help,' continued she, ' the girls who have none ! What signifies beauty, Mr. Thornhill ? or what signifies all the virtues and all the qualifications in the world, in this age of self-interest ? It is not, what is she ? but, what has she ? is all the cry.'

' Madam,' returned he, ' I highly approve the justice, as well as the novelty of your remarks ; and if I were a king, it should be otherwise : it should then, indeed, be fine times for the girls without fortunes : our two young ladies should be the first for whom I would provide.'

' Ah, sir,' returned my wife, ' you are pleased to be

facetious : but I wish I were a queen ; and then I know where my eldest daughter should look for a husband. But now that you put it into my head, seriously, Mr. Thornhill, can't you recommend me a proper husband for her ? She is now nineteen years old, well grown, and well educated ; and, in my humble opinion, does not want for parts.'

'Madam,' replied he, 'if I were to choose, I would find out a person possessed of every accomplishment that can make an angel happy ; one with prudence, fortune, taste, and sincerity : such, madam, would be, in my opinion, the proper husband.'—'Ay, sir,' said she ; 'but do you know of any such person ?'—'No, madam,' returned he, 'it is impossible to know any person that deserves to be her husband : she's too great a treasure for one man's possession ; she's a goddess : upon my soul, I speak what I think ; she is an angel.'—'Ah, Mr. Thornhill, you only flatter my poor girl ; but we have been thinking of marrying her to one of your tenants, whose mother is lately dead, and who wants a manager ; you know whom I mean,—farmer Williams ; a warm man, Mr. Thornhill, able to give her good bread ; and who has several times made her proposals :' which was actually the case. 'But, sir,' concluded she, 'I should be glad to have your approbation of our choice.'—'How, madam !' replied he, 'my approbation ? my approbation of such a choice ? Never. What ! sacrifice so much beauty, and sense, and goodness, to a creature insensible of the blessing ? Excuse me, I can never approve of such a piece of injustice ; and I have my reasons.'—'Indeed, sir,' cried Deborah, 'if you have your reasons, that's another affair ; but I should be glad to know those reasons.'—'Excuse me, madam,' returned he ; 'they lie too deep for discovery ;' laying his hand upon his bosom ; 'they remain buried, riveted here.'

After he was gone, upon a general consultation, we could not tell what to make of these fine sentiments. Olivia considered them as instances of the most exalted passion ; but I was not quite so sanguine : it seemed to me pretty plain, that they had more of love than ma-

trimony in them; yet, whatever they might portend, it was resolved to prosecute the scheme of farmer Williams, who, from my daughter's first appearance in the country, had paid her his addresses.

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CHAP. XVII.—Scarcely any virtue found to resist the power of long and pleasing temptation.

As I only studied my child's real happiness, the assiduity of Mr. Williams pleased me, as he was in easy circumstances, prudent, and sincere. It required but very little encouragement to revive his former passion; so that in an evening or two he and Mr. Thornhill met at our house, and surveyed each other for some time with looks of anger; but Williams owed his landlord no rent, and little regarded his indignation. Olivia, on her side, acted the coquette to perfection, if that might be called acting which was her real character, pretending to lavish all her tenderness on her new lover. Mr. Thornhill appeared quite dejected at this preference, and, with a pensive air, took leave; though I own it puzzled me to find him in so much pain as he appeared to be, when he had it in his power so easily to remove the cause, by declaring an honourable passion. But whatever uneasiness he seemed to endure, it could easily be perceived that Olivia's anguish was much greater. After any of these interviews between her lovers, of which there were several, she usually retired to solitude, and there indulged her grief. It was in such a situation I found her one evening, after she had been for some time supporting a fictitious gaiety. 'You now see, my child,' said I, 'that your confidence in Mr. Thornhill's passion was all a dream: he permits the rivalry of another, every way his inferior, though he knows it lies in his power to secure you to himself by a candid declaration.'—'Yes, papa,' returned she, 'but he has his reasons for this delay; I know he has. The sincerity of his looks and words convinces me of his real esteem. A short time, I hope, will discover

the generosity of his sentiments, and convince you that my opinion of him has been more just than yours.'—'Olivia, my darling,' returned I, 'every scheme that has been hitherto pursued to compel him to a declaration has been proposed and planned by yourself, nor can you in the least say that I have constrained you; but you must not suppose, my dear, that I will ever be instrumental in suffering his honest rival to be the dupe of your ill-placed passion. Whatever time you require to bring your fancied admirer to an explanation, shall be granted; but, at the expiration of that term, if he is still regardless, I must absolutely insist that honest Mr. Williams shall be rewarded for his fidelity: the character which I have hitherto supported in life demands this from me; and my tenderness as a parent shall never influence my integrity as a man. Name, then, your day; let it be as distant as you think proper; and in the mean time take care to let Mr. Thornhill know the exact time on which I design delivering you up to another. If he really loves you, his own good sense will readily suggest that there is but one method alone to prevent his losing you for ever.' This proposal, which she could not avoid considering as perfectly just, was readily agreed to. She again renewed her most positive promise of marrying Mr. Williams, in case of the other's insensibility; and, at the next opportunity, in Mr. Thornhill's presence, that day month was fixed upon for her nuptials with his rival.

Such vigorous proceedings seemed to redouble Mr. Thornhill's anxiety; but what Olivia really felt gave me some uneasiness. In this struggle between prudence and passion, her vivacity quite forsook her, and every opportunity of solitude was sought, and spent in tears. One week passed away; but Mr. Thornhill made no efforts to restrain her nuptials. The succeeding week he was still assiduous, but not more open. On the third he discontinued his visits entirely; and instead of my daughter testifying any impatience, as I expected, she seemed to retain a pensive tranquillity, which I looked upon as resignation. For my own part, I was now sincerely pleased with thinking that my child was going to be se-



cured in a continuance of competence and peace, and frequently applauded her resolution, in preferring happiness to ostentation.

It was within about four days of her intended nuptials, that my little family at night were gathered round a charming fire, telling stories of the past, and laying schemes for the future. Busied in forming a thousand projects, and laughing at whatever folly came uppermost, 'Well, Moses,' cried I, 'we shall soon, my boy, have a wedding in the family. What is your opinion of matters, and things in general?'—'My opinion, father, is, that all things go on very well; and I was just now thinking, that when sister Livy is married to farmer Williams, we shall then have the loan of his cider-press and brewing-tubs for nothing.'—'That we shall, Moses,' cried I, 'and he will sing us Death and the Lady, to raise our spirits, into the bargain.'—'He has taught that song to our Dick,' cried Moses; 'and I think he goes through it very prettily.'—'Does he so?' cried I; 'then let us have it: where is little Dick? let him up with it boldly.'—'My brother Dick,' cried Bill, my youngest, 'is just gone out with sister Livy; but Mr. Williams has taught me two songs, and I'll sing them for you, papa. Which song do you choose—The Dying Swan, or the Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog?'—'The elegy, child, by all means,' said I: 'I never heard that yet; and, Deborah, my life, grief, you know, is dry; let us have a bottle of the best gooseberry-wine, to keep up our spirits. I have wept so much at all sorts of elegies of late, that, without an enlivening glass, I am sure this will overcome me: and, Sophy, love, take your guitar, and thrum in with the boy a little.'

#### AN ELEGY

##### *On the Death of a Mad Dog.*

Good people all, of every sort,  
Give ear unto my song;  
And if you find it wondrous short,  
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington, there was a man,  
Of whom the world might say,

That still a godly race he ran,  
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,  
To comfort friends and foes ;  
The naked every day he clad,  
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,  
As many dogs there be,  
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,  
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man, at first, were friends ;  
But when a pique began,  
The dog, to gain some private ends,  
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around, from all the neighbouring streets,  
The wondering neighbours ran ;  
And swore the dog had lost his wits,  
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad  
To every Christian eye ;  
And, while they swore the dog was mad,  
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,  
That show'd the rogues they lied :  
The man recover'd of the bite,  
The dog it was that died.

‘A very good boy, Bill, upon my word ; and an elegy that may truly be called tragical. Come, my children, here’s Bill’s health, and may he one day be a bishop !’

‘With all my heart,’ cries my wife ; ‘and if he but preaches as well as he sings, I make no doubt of him. The most of his family, by the mother’s side, could sing a good song : it was a common saying, in our country, that the family of the Blenkinsops could never look straight before them, nor the Hugginsons blow out a candle ; that there were none of the Grograms but could sing a song, or of the Marjorams but could tell a story.’ — ‘However that be,’ cried I, ‘the most vulgar ballad of all generally pleases me better than the fine modern odes, and things that petrify us in a single stanza ; productions, that we at once detest and praise. Put the glass to your brother, Moses. The great fault of these elegiasts is,

that they are in despair for griefs that give the sensible part of mankind very little pain. A lady loses her muff, her fan, or her lap-dog, and so the silly poet runs home to versify the disaster.'

'That may be the mode,' cried Moses, 'in sublimer compositions: but the Ranelagh songs, that come down to us, are perfectly familiar, and all cast in the same mould. Colin meets Dolly, and they hold a dialogue together; he gives her a fairing to put in her hair, and she presents him with a nosegay; and then they go together to church, where they give good advice to young nymphs and swains to get married as fast as they can.'

'And very good advice too,' cried I; 'and I am told there is not a place in the world where advice can be given with so much propriety as there; for, as it persuades us to marry, it also furnishes us with a wife; and surely that must be an excellent market, my boy, where we are told what we want, and supplied with it when wanting.'

'Yes, sir,' returned Moses, 'and I know but of two such markets for wives in Europe—Ranelagh in England, and Fontarabia in Spain. The Spanish market is open once a year, but our English wives are saleable every night.'

'You are right, my boy,' cried his mother; 'old England is the only place in the world for husbands to get wives.'—'And for wives to manage their husbands,' interrupted I. 'It is a proverb abroad, that if a bridge were built across the sea, all the ladies of the continent would come over to take pattern from ours; for there are no such wives in Europe as our own. But let us have one bottle more, Deborah, my life! and, Moses, give us a good song. What thanks do we not owe to Heaven, for thus bestowing tranquillity, health, and competence! I think myself happier now than the greatest monarch upon earth. He has no such fire-side, nor such pleasant faces about it. Yes, Deborah, we are now growing old; but the evening of our life is likely to be happy. We are descended from ancestors that knew no stain, and we shall leave a good and virtuous race of

children behind us. While we live they will be our support and our pleasure here, and when we die they will transmit our honour untainted to posterity. Come, my son, we wait for a song: let us have a chorus. But where is my darling Olivia? That little cherub's voice is always sweetest in the concert.' Just as I spoke, Dick came running in—'O papa, papa, she is gone from us—she is gone from us; my sister Livy is gone from us for ever!'—'Gone, child?'—'Yes; she is gone off with two gentlemen in a post-chaise; and one of them kissed her, and said he would die for her; and she cried very much, and was for coming back; but he persuaded her again, and she went into the chaise, and said, O! what will my poor papa do when he knows I am undone?'—'Now, then,' cried I, 'my children, go, and be miserable; for we shall never enjoy one hour more. And, O, may Heaven's everlasting fury light upon him and his! Thus to rob me of my child!—And sure it will—for taking back my sweet innocent, that I was leading up to heaven! Such sincerity as my child was possessed of! But all our earthly happiness is now over. Go, my children, go, and be miserable and infamous—for my heart is broken within me.'—'Father,' cried my son, 'is this your fortitude?'—'Fortitude, child?'—'Yes, he shall see I have fortitude: bring me my pistols—I'll pursue the traitor—while he is on earth, I'll pursue him! Old as I am, he shall find I can sting him yet—the villain—the perfidious villain!' I had by this time reached down my pistols, when my poor wife, whose passions were not so strong as mine, caught me in her arms. 'My dearest, dearest husband,' cried she, 'the Bible is the only weapon that is fit for your old hands now. Open that, my love, and read our anguish into patience, for she has vilely deceived us.'—'Indeed, sir,' resumed my son, after a pause, 'your rage is too violent and unbecoming. You should be my mother's comforter, and you increase her pain. It ill suited you and your reverend character, thus to curse your greatest enemy; you should not have cursed him, villain as he is.'—'I did not curse him, child, did I?'—'Indeed, sir, you did; you cursed him

twice.'—'Then may Heaven forgive me and him if I did. And now, my son, I see it was more than human benevolence, that first taught us to bless our enemies. Blessed be his holy name for all the good he has given, and for all that he has taken away. But it is not—it is not a small distress, that can wring tears from these old eyes, that have not wept for so many years. My child, to undo my darling! May confusion seize—Heaven forgive me; what am I about to say? You may remember, my love, how good she was, and how charming; till this vile moment, all her care was to make us happy. Had she but died! But she is gone; the honour of our family is contaminated; and I must look out for happiness in other worlds than here. But, my child, you saw them go off; perhaps he forced her away. If he forced her, she may yet be innocent.'—'Ah, no, sir,' cried the child; 'he only kissed her, and called her his angel, and she wept very much, and leaned upon his arm, and they drove off very fast.'—'She's an ungrateful creature,' cried my wife, who could scarce speak for weeping, 'to use us thus: she never had the least constraint put upon her affections. The vile strumpet has basely deserted her parents without any provocation: thus to bring your gray hairs to the grave! and I must shortly follow.'

In this manner that night, the first of our real misfortunes, was spent, in the bitterness of complaint, and ill-supported sallies of enthusiasm. I determined, however, to find out our betrayer, wherever he was, and reproach his baseness. The next morning we missed our wretched child at breakfast, where she used to give life and cheerfulness to us all. My wife, as before, attempted to ease her heart by reproaches. 'Never,' cried she, 'shall that vilest stain of our family again darken these harmless doors. I will never call her daughter more. No! let the strumpet live with her vile seducer: she may bring us to shame, but she shall never more deceive us.'

'Wife,' said I, 'do not talk thus hardly: my detestation of her guilt is as great as yours; but ever shall this house and this heart be open to a poor, returning, re-

pentant sinner. The sooner she returns from her transgression, the more welcome shall she be to me. For the first time, the very best may err : art may persuade, and novelty spread out its charm. The first fault is the child of simplicity, but every other the offspring of guilt. Yes, the wretched creature shall be welcome to this heart and this house, though stained with ten thousand vices. I will again hearken to the music of her voice, again will I hang fondly on her bosom, if I find but repentance there. My son, bring hither my Bible and my staff ; I will pursue her, wherever she is ; and though I cannot save her from shame, I may prevent the continuance of her iniquity.'

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CHAP. XVIII.—The pursuit of a father to reclaim a lost child to virtue.

Though the child could not describe the gentleman's person who handed his sister into the post-chaise, yet my suspicions fell entirely upon our young landlord, whose character for such intrigues was but too well known : I therefore directed my steps towards Thornhill Castle, resolving to upbraid him, and, if possible, to bring back my daughter ; but before I had reached his seat, I was met by one of my parishioners, who said he saw a young lady, resembling my daughter, in a post-chaise with a gentleman, whom, by the description, I could only guess to be Mr. Burchell ; and that they drove very fast. This information, however, did by no means satisfy me ; I therefore went to the young squire's, and, though it was yet early, insisted upon seeing him immediately : he soon appeared with the most open, familiar air, and seemed perfectly amazed at my daughter's elopement, protesting upon his honour that he was quite a stranger to it. I now, therefore, condemned my former suspicions, and could turn them only on Mr. Burchell, who, I recollected, had of late several private conferences with her ; but the appearance of another witness left me no room to doubt of his villany, who averred that he and my daughter

were actually gone towards the Wells, about thirty miles off, where there was a great deal of company. Being driven to that state of mind, in which we are more ready to act precipitately than to reason right, I never debated with myself, whether these accounts might not have been given by persons purposely placed in my way to mislead me, but resolved to pursue my daughter and her fancied deluder thither. I walked along with earnestness, and inquired of several by the way; but received no accounts, till, entering the town, I was met by a person on horseback, whom I remembered to have seen at the squire's, and he assured me, that if I followed them to the races, which were but thirty miles farther, I might depend upon overtaking them; for he had seen them dance there the night before, and the whole assembly seemed charmed with my daughter's performance. Early the next day, I walked forward to the races, and, about four in the afternoon, I came upon the course. The company made a very brilliant appearance, all earnestly employed in one pursuit,—that of pleasure: how different from mine, that of reclaiming a lost child to virtue! I thought I perceived Mr. Burchell at some distance from me; but as he dreaded an interview, upon my approaching him, he mixed among a crowd, and I saw him no more.

I now reflected, that it would be to no purpose to continue my pursuit farther; and resolved to return home to an innocent family, who wanted my assistance: but the agitations of my mind, and the fatigues I had undergone, threw me into a fever, the symptoms of which I perceived before I came off the course. This was another unexpected stroke; as I was more than seventy miles distant from home: however, I retired to a little alehouse by the road-side; and in this place, the usual retreat of indigence and frugality, I laid me down patiently to wait the issue of my disorder. I languished here for near three weeks; but at last my constitution prevailed, though I was unprovided with money to defray the expenses of my entertainment. It is possible the anxiety from this last circumstance alone might have brought on a relapse, had I not been supplied by a traveller, who stopped to take a

cursorily refreshment. This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Church-yard, who has written so many little books for children : he called himself their friend ; but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted, but he was in haste to be gone ; for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one Mr. Thomas Trip. I immediately recollected this good-natured man's red pimpled face ; for he had published for me against the deuterogamists of the age ; and from him I borrowed a few pieces, to be paid at my return. Leaving the inn, therefore, as I was yet but weak, I resolved to return home by easy journeys of ten miles a day.

My health and usual tranquillity were almost restored, and I now condemned that pride which had made me refractory to the hand of correction. Man little knows what calamities are beyond his patience to bear, till he tries them : as, in ascending the heights of ambition, which look bright from below, every step we arise shows us some new and gloomy prospect of hidden disappointment ; so, in our descent from the summits of pleasure, though the vale of misery below may appear at first dark and gloomy, yet the busy mind, still attentive to its own amusement, finds, as we descend, something to flatter and to please. Still as we approach, the darkest objects appear to brighten, and the mental eye becomes adapted to its gloomy situation.

I now proceeded forward, and had walked about two hours, when I perceived what appeared at a distance like a waggon, which I was resolved to overtake ; but when I came up with it, found it to be a strolling company's cart, that was carrying their scenes and other theatrical furniture to the next village, where they were to exhibit.

The cart was attended only by the person who drove it, and one of the company ; as the rest of the players were to follow the ensuing day. ' Good company upon the road,' says the proverb, ' is the shortest cut ;' I therefore entered into conversation with the poor player ; and



as I once had some theatrical powers myself, I descanted on such topics with my usual freedom ; but as I was but little acquainted with the present state of the stage, I demanded who were the present theatrical writers in vogue, who the Drydens and Otways of the day. ‘ I fancy, sir,’ cried the player, ‘ few of our modern dramatists would think themselves much honoured by being compared to the writers you mention : Dryden’s and Rowe’s manner, sir, are quite out of fashion : our taste has gone back a whole century : Fletcher, Ben Jonson, and all the plays of Shakspeare, are the only things that go down.’—‘ How !’ cried I : ‘ is it possible the present age can be pleased with that antiquated dialect, that obsolete humour, those overcharged characters, which abound in the works you mention ?’—‘ Sir,’ returned my companion, ‘ the public thinks nothing about dialect, or humour, or character, for that is none of their business ; they only go to be amused, and find themselves happy when they can enjoy a pantomime, under the sanction of Jonson’s or Shakspeare’s name.’—‘ So, then, I suppose,’ cried I, ‘ that our modern dramatists are rather imitators of Shakspeare than nature.’—‘ To say the truth,’ returned my companion, ‘ I don’t know that they imitate any thing at all ; nor indeed does the public require it of them : it is not the composition of the piece, but the number of starts and attitudes that may be introduced, that elicits applause. I have known a piece, with not one jest in the whole, shrugged into popularity ; and another saved, by the poet’s throwing in a fit of the gripes. No, sir, the works of Congreve and Farquhar have too much wit in them for the present taste ; our modern dialect is much more natural.’

By this time the equipage of the strolling company was arrived at the village, which, it seems, had been apprised of our approach, and was come out to gaze at us ; for my companion observed, that strollers always have more spectators without doors than within. I did not consider the impropriety of my being in such company, till I saw a mob gather about me : I therefore took shelter, as fast as possible, in the first alehouse that

offered ; and being shown into the common room, was accosted by a very well-dressed gentleman, who demanded whether I was the real chaplain of the company, or whether it was only to be my masquerade character in the play. Upon my informing him of the truth, and that I did not belong in any sort to the company, he was condescending enough to desire me and the player to partake in a bowl of punch, over which he discussed modern politics with great earnestness and interest. I set him down in my mind for nothing less than a parliament-man at least ; but was almost confirmed in my conjectures, when, upon asking what there was in the house for supper, he insisted that the player and I should sup with him at his house ; with which request, after some entreaties, we were prevailed on to comply.

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CHAP. XIX.—The description of a person discontented with the present government, and apprehensive of the loss of our liberties.

The house where we were to be entertained lying at a small distance from the village, our inviter observed, that as the coach was not ready, he would conduct us on foot, and we soon arrived at one of the most magnificent mansions I had seen in that part of the country. The apartment into which we were shown was perfectly elegant and modern : he went to give orders for supper, while the player, with a wink, observed that we were perfectly in luck. Our entertainer soon returned, an elegant supper was brought in, two or three ladies in an easy deshabille were introduced, and the conversation began with some sprightliness. Politics, however, was the subject on which our entertainer chiefly expatiated ; for he asserted that liberty was at once his boast and his terror. After the cloth was removed, he asked me if I had seen the last Monitor ; to which replying in the negative, ‘ What, nor the Auditor, I suppose ? ’ cried he. ‘ Neither, sir,’ returned I. ‘ That’s strange, very strange,’ replied my entertainer : ‘ now I read all the politics that come out,

the Daily, the Public, the Ledger, the Chronicle, the London Evening, the Whitehall Evening, the seventeen Magazines, and the two Reviews; and though they hate each other, I love them all. Liberty, sir, liberty is the Briton's boast; and, by all my coal-mines in Cornwall, I reverence its guardians.'—'Then it is to be hoped,' cried I, 'you reverence the king.'—'Yes,' returned my entertainer, 'when he does what we would have him; but if he goes on as he has done of late, I'll never trouble myself more with his matters. I say nothing: I think only I could have directed some things better. I don't think there has been a sufficient number of advisers; he should advise with every person willing to give him advice, and then we should have things done in another guess manner.'

'I wish,' cried I, 'that such intruding advisers were fixed in the pillory. It should be the duty of honest men to assist the weaker side of our constitution; that sacred power, that has for some years been every day declining, and losing its due share of influence in the state. But these ignorants still continue the cry of liberty; and if they have any weight, basely throw it into the subsiding scale.'

'How!' cried one of the ladies; 'do I live to see one so base, so sordid, as to be an enemy to liberty, and a defender of tyrants;—liberty, that sacred gift of Heaven, that glorious privilege of Britons?'

'Can it be possible,' cried our entertainer, 'that there should be any found, at present, advocates for slavery? Any, who are for meanly giving up the privileges of Britons? Can any, sir, be so abject?'

'No, sir,' replied I, 'I am for liberty, that attribute of gods! Glorious liberty! that theme of modern declamation. I would have all men kings: I would be a king myself. We have all naturally an equal right to the throne; we are all originally equal. This is my opinion, and was once the opinion of a set of honest men who are called levellers. They tried to erect themselves into a community, where all should be equally free. But, alas! it would never answer: for there were some among

them stronger, and some more cunning than others, and these became masters of the rest ; for as sure as your groom rides your horses, because he is a cunninger animal than they, so surely will the animal that is cunninger or stronger than he sit upon his shoulders in turn. Since then it is entailed upon humanity to submit, and some are born to command, and others to obey, the question is, as there must be tyrants, whether it is better to have them in the same house with us, or in the same village, or still farther off in the metropolis. Now, sir, for my own part, as I naturally hate the face of a tyrant, the farther off he is removed from me, the better pleased am I. The generality of mankind also are of my way of thinking, and have unanimously created one king, whose election at once diminishes the number of tyrants, and puts tyranny at the greatest distance from the greatest number of people. Now the great, who were tyrants themselves before the election of one tyrant, are naturally averse to a power raised over them, and whose weight must ever lean heaviest on the subordinate orders. It is the interest of the great, therefore, to diminish kingly power as much as possible ; because, whatever they take from that is naturally restored to themselves ; and all they have to do in the state, is to undermine the single tyrant, by which they resume their primeval authority. Now the state may be so circumstanced, or its laws may be so disposed, or its men of opulence so minded, as all to conspire in carrying on this business of undermining monarchy : for, in the first place, if the circumstances of our state be such, as to favour the accumulation of wealth, and make the opulent still more rich, this will increase their ambition. An accumulation of wealth, however, must necessarily be the consequence, when, as at present, more riches flow in from external commerce than arise from internal industry ; for external commerce can only be managed to advantage by the rich, and they have also at the same time all the emoluments arising from internal industry ; so that the rich, with us, have two sources of wealth, whereas the poor have but one. For this reason, wealth in all commercial states is found to accumulate ; and all such

have hitherto in time become aristocratical. Again, the very laws also of the country may contribute to the accumulation of wealth; as when, by their means, the natural ties that bind the rich and poor together are broken; and it is ordained, that the rich shall only marry with the rich; or when the learned are held unqualified to serve their country as counsellors, merely from a defect of opulence; and wealth is thus made the object of a wise man's ambition: by these means, I say, and such means as these, riches will accumulate. Now the possessor of accumulated wealth, when furnished with the necessaries and pleasures of life, has no other method to employ the superfluity of his fortune, but in purchasing power; that is, differently speaking, in making dependents, by purchasing the liberty of the needy or the venal, of men who are willing to bear the mortification of contiguous tyranny for bread. Thus each very opulent man generally gathers round him a circle of the poorest of the people; and the polity abounding in accumulated wealth may be compared to a Cartesian system, each orb with a vortex of its own. Those, however, who are willing to move in a great man's vortex are only such as must be slaves, the rabble of mankind, whose souls and whose education are adapted to servitude, and who know nothing of liberty except the name. But there must still be a large number of the people without the sphere of the opulent man's influence, namely, that order of men which subsists between the very rich and the very rabble; those men, who are possessed of too large fortunes to submit to the neighbouring man in power, and yet are too poor to set up for tyranny themselves. In this middle order of mankind are generally to be found all the arts, wisdom, and virtues of society: this order alone is known to be the true preserver of freedom, and may be called the people. Now it may happen, that this middle order of mankind may lose all its influence in a state, and its voice be in a manner drowned in that of the rabble; for, if the fortune sufficient for qualifying a person at present to give his voice in state affairs be ten times less than was judged sufficient upon forming the constitution, it is evident, that greater

numbers of the rabble will thus be introduced into the political system, and they, ever moving in the vortex of the great, will follow where greatness shall direct. In such a state, therefore, all that the middle order has left is to preserve the prerogative and privileges of the one principal governor with the most sacred circumspection; for he divides the power of the rich, and calls off the great from falling with tenfold weight on the middle order placed beneath them. The middle order may be compared to a town, of which the opulent are forming the siege, and of which the governor from without is hastening the relief. While the besiegers are in dread of an enemy over them, it is but natural to offer the townsmen the most specious terms, to flatter them with sounds, and amuse them with privileges; but if they once defeat the governor from behind, the walls of the town will be but a small defence to its inhabitants. What they may then expect, may be seen by turning our eyes to Holland, Genoa, or Venice, where the laws govern the poor, and the rich govern the law. I am then for, and would die for, monarchy, sacred monarchy; for if there be any thing sacred amongst men, it must be the anointed sovereign of his people; and every diminution of his power, in war or peace, is an infringement upon the real liberties of the subject. The sounds of liberty, patriotism, and Britons, have already done much; it is to be hoped, that the true sons of freedom will prevent their ever doing more. I have known many of these pretended champions for liberty in my time, yet do I not remember one that was not in his heart and in his family a tyrant.'

My warmth, I found, had lengthened this harangue beyond the rules of good-breeding; but the impatience of my entertainer, who often strove to interrupt it, could be restrained no longer. 'What!' cried he: 'then I have been all this while entertaining a jesuit in parson's clothes? but, by all the coal-mines of Cornwall, out he shall pack, if my name be Wilkinson.' I now found I had gone too far, and asked pardon for the warmth with which I had spoken. 'Pardon?' returned he, in a fury: 'I think such principles demand ten thousand pardons. What!

give up liberty, property, and, as the Gazetteer says, lie down to be saddled with wooden shoes ! Sir, I insist upon your marching out of this house immediately, to prevent worse consequences : sir, I insist upon it.' I was going to repeat my remonstrances ; but just then we heard a footman's rap at the door, and the two ladies cried out, ' As sure as death, there is our master and mistress come home ! ' It seems my entertainer was all this while only the butler, who, in his master's absence, had a mind to cut a figure, and be for a while the gentleman himself ; and, to say the truth, he talked politics as well as most country gentlemen do. But nothing could now exceed my confusion, upon seeing the gentleman and his lady enter ; nor was their surprise, at finding such company and good cheer, less than ours. ' Gentlemen,' cried the real master of the house to me and my companion, ' my wife and I are your most humble servants ; but I protest this is so unexpected a favour, that we almost sink under the obligation.' However unexpected our company might be to them, theirs, I am sure, was still more so to us ; and I was struck dumb with the apprehensions of my own absurdity, when, whom should I next see enter the room but my dear Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was formerly designed to be married to my son George ; but whose match was broken off, as already related ! As soon as she saw me, she flew to my arms with the utmost joy. ' My dear sir,' cried she, ' to what happy accident is it that we owe so unexpected a visit ? I am sure my uncle and aunt will be in raptures when they find they have got the good doctor Primrose for their guest.' Upon hearing my name, the old gentleman and lady very politely stepped up, and welcomed me with most cordial hospitality ; nor could they forbear smiling, on being informed of the nature of my present visit ; but the unfortunate butler, whom they at first seemed disposed to turn away, was, at my intercession, forgiven.

Mr. Arnold and his lady, to whom the house belonged, now insisted upon having the pleasure of my stay for some days ; and as their niece, my charming pupil, whose mind, in some measure, had been formed under my own

instructions, joined in their entreaties, I complied. That night I was shown to a magnificent chamber; and the next morning early, Miss Wilmot desired to walk with me in the garden, which was decorated in the modern manner. After some time spent in pointing out the beauties of the place, she inquired, with seeming unconcern, when last I had heard from my son George. 'Alas! madam,' cried I, 'he has now been near three years absent, without ever writing to his friends or me. Where he is, I know not; perhaps I shall never see him or happiness more. No, my dear madam, we shall never more see such pleasing hours as were once spent by our fire-side at Wakefield: my little family are now dispersing very fast; and poverty has brought not only want, but infamy upon us.' The good-natured girl let fall a tear at this account; but, as I saw her possessed of too much sensibility, I forbore a more minute detail of our sufferings. It was, however, some consolation to me to find that time had made no alteration in her affections, and that she had rejected several offers that had been made her since our leaving her part of the country. She led me round all the extensive improvements of the place, pointing to the several walks and arbours, and at the same time catching from every object a hint for some new question relative to my son. In this manner we spent the forenoon, till the bell summoned us to dinner, where we found the manager of the strolling company that I mentioned before, who was come to dispose of tickets for the Fair Penitent, which was to be acted that evening; the part of Horatio by a young gentleman who had never appeared on any stage. He seemed to be very warm in the praise of the new performer, and averred that he never saw any one who bid so fair for excellence. Acting, he observed, was not learned in a day: 'But this gentleman,' continued he, 'seems born to tread the stage: his voice, his figure, and attitudes are all admirable. We caught him up accidentally, in our journey down.' This account, in some measure, excited our curiosity, and, at the entreaty of the ladies, I was prevailed upon to accompany them to the play-house, which was no other



than a barn. As the company with which I went was incontestably the chief of the place, we were received with the greatest respect, and placed in the front seat of the theatre; where we sat for some time with no small impatience to see Horatio make his appearance. The new performer advanced at last; and let parents think of my sensations by their own, when I found it was my unfortunate son! He was going to begin; when, turning his eyes upon the audience, he perceived Miss Wilmot and me, and stood at once speechless and immoveable.

The actors behind the scenes, who ascribed this pause to his natural timidity, attempted to encourage him; but, instead of going on, he burst into a flood of tears, and retired off the stage. I don't know what were my feelings on this occasion, for they succeeded with too much rapidity for description; but I was soon awaked from this disagreeable reverie by Miss Wilmot, who, pale, and with a trembling voice, desired me to conduct her back to her uncle's. When got home, Mr. Arnold, who was as yet a stranger to our extraordinary behaviour, being informed that the new performer was my son, sent his coach, and an invitation for him; and, as he persisted in his refusal to appear again upon the stage, the players put another in his place, and we soon had him with us. Mr. Arnold gave him the kindest reception, and I received him with my usual transport, for I could never counterfeit a false resentment. Miss Wilmot's reception was mixed with seeming neglect, and yet I could perceive she acted a studied part. The tumult in her mind seemed not yet abated: she said twenty giddy things that looked like joy, and then laughed loud at her own want of meaning: at intervals she would take a sly peep at the glass, as if happy in the consciousness of irresistible beauty; and often would ask questions, without giving any manner of attention to the answers.

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CHAP. XX.—The history of a philosophic vagabond, pursuing novelty, but losing content.

After we had supped, Mrs. Arnold politely offered to send a couple of her footmen for my son's baggage, which he at first seemed to decline; but, upon her pressing the request, he was obliged to inform her, that a stick and a wallet were all the moveable things upon this earth which he could boast of. 'Why, ay, my son,' cried I, 'you left me but poor; and poor, I find, you are come back: and yet, I make no doubt, you have seen a great deal of the world.'—'Yes, sir,' replied my son; 'but travelling after fortune is not the way to secure her; and, indeed, of late, I have desisted from the pursuit.'—'I fancy, sir,' cried Mrs. Arnold, 'that the account of your adventures would be amusing: the first part of them I have often heard from my niece; but could the company prevail for the rest, it would be an additional obligation.'—'Madam,' replied my son, 'I promise you, the pleasure you have in hearing will not be half so great as my vanity in repeating them; and yet in the whole narrative I can scarcely promise you one adventure, as my account is rather of what I saw than what I did. The first misfortune of my life, which you all know, was great; but though it distressed, it could not sink me. No person ever had a better knack at hoping than I. The less kind I found Fortune at one time, the more I expected from her at another; and being now at the bottom of her wheel, every new revolution might lift, but could not depress me: I proceeded, therefore, towards London in a fine morning, no way uneasy about to-morrow, but cheerful as the birds that carolled by the road; and comforted myself with reflecting that London was the mart where abilities of every kind were sure of meeting distinction and reward.

'Upon my arrival in town, sir, my first care was to deliver your letter of recommendation to our cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than I. My first scheme, you know, sir, was to be usher at an academy, and I asked his advice on the affair. Our cousin

received the proposal with a true Sardonian grin. Ay, cried he, this is indeed a very pretty career that has been chalked out for you. I have been an usher to a boarding-school myself; and may I die by an anodyne necklace, but I had rather be an under turnkey in Newgate. I was up early and late: I was brow-beat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys within, and never permitted to stir out to meet civility abroad. But are you sure you are fit for a school? Let me examine you a little. Have you been bred apprentice to the business?—No.—Then you won't do for a school. Can you dress the boy's hair?—No.—Then you won't do for a school. Have you had the small-pox?—No.—Then you won't do for a school. Can you lie three in a bed?—No.—Then you will never do for a school. Have you got a good stomach?—Yes.—Then you will by no means do for a school. No, sir, if you are for a genteel, easy profession, bind yourself seven years as an apprentice to turn a cutler's wheel; but avoid a school by any means. Yet come, continued he, I see you are a lad of spirit, and some learning: what do you think of commencing author like me? You have read in books, no doubt, of men of genius starving at the trade; at present, I'll show you forty very dull fellows about town that live by it in opulence: all honest, jog-trot men, who go on smoothly and dully, and write history and politics, and are praised: men, sir, who, had they been bred cobblers, would all their lives have only mended shoes, but never made them.

Finding that there was no great degree of gentility affixed to the character of an usher, I resolved to accept his proposal; and having the highest respect for literature, hailed the *antiqua mater* of Grub-street with reverence. I thought it my glory to pursue a track which Dryden and Otway trod before me: I considered the goddess of this region as the parent of excellence; and, however an intercourse with the world might give us good sense, the poverty she entailed I supposed to be the nurse of genius. Big with these reflections, I sat down; and finding that the best things remained to be said on the

wrong side, I resolved to write a book that should be wholly new : I therefore dressed up three paradoxes with some ingenuity ; they were false, indeed, but they were new. The jewels of truth have been so often imported by others, that nothing was left for me to import, but some splendid things, that at a distance looked every bit as well. Witness, you powers, what fancied importance sat perched upon my quill while I was writing ! The whole learned world, I made no doubt, would rise to oppose my systems ; but then I was prepared to oppose the whole learned world. Like the porcupine, I sat self-collected, with a quill pointed against every opposer.'

' Well said, my boy,' cried I : ' and what subject did you treat upon ? I hope you did not pass over the importance of monogamy. But I interrupt ; go on. You published your paradoxes : well, and what did the learned world say to your paradoxes ?'

' Sir,' replied my son, ' the learned world said nothing to my paradoxes ; nothing at all, sir. Every man of them was employed in praising his friends and himself, or condemning his enemies ; and unfortunately, as I had neither, I suffered the cruellest mortification—neglect.'

' As I was meditating one day, in a coffee-house, on the fate of my paradoxes, a little man, happening to enter the room, placed himself in the box before me ; and, after some preliminary discourse, finding me to be a scholar, drew out a bundle of proposals, begging me to subscribe to a new edition he was going to give the world of Propertius, with notes. This demand necessarily produced a reply, that I had no money ; and that concession led him to inquire into the nature of my expectations. Finding that my expectations were just as great as my purse,—I see, cried he, you are unacquainted with the town : I'll teach you a part of it. Look at these proposals ; upon these very proposals I have subsisted very comfortably for twelve years. The moment a nobleman returns from his travels, a Creolian arrives from Jamaica, or a dowager from her country-seat, I strike for a subscription. I first besiege their hearts with flattery, and

then pour in my proposals at the breach. If they subscribe readily the first time, I renew my request to beg a dedication-fee; if they let me have that, I smite them once more for engraving their coat of arms at the top. Thus, continued he, I live by vanity, and laugh at it. But, between ourselves, I am now too well known. I should be glad to borrow your face a bit. A nobleman of distinction has just returned from Italy; my face is familiar to his porter; but if you bring this copy of verses, my life for it, you succeed, and we divide the spoil.'

'Bless us, George,' cried I; 'and is this the employment of poets now? Do men of their exalted talents thus stoop to beggary? Can they so far disgrace their calling, as to make a vile traffic of praise for bread?'

'O, no, sir,' returned he; 'a true poet can never be so base; for wherever there is genius there is pride. The creatures I now describe are only beggars in rhyme. The real poet, as he braves every hardship for fame, so is he equally a coward to contempt; and none but those who are unworthy protection condescend to solicit it.'

'Having a mind too proud to stoop to such indignities, and yet a fortune too humble to hazard a second attempt for fame, I was now obliged to take a middle course, and write for bread; but I was unqualified for a profession, where mere industry alone was to ensure success. I could not suppress my lurking passion for applause; but usually consumed that time in efforts after excellence which takes up but little room, when it should have been more advantageously employed, in the diffusive productions of fruitful mediocrity; my little piece would therefore come forth in the midst of periodical publications, unnoticed and unknown. The public were more importantly employed than to observe the easy simplicity of my style, or the harmony of my periods. Sheet after sheet was thrown off to oblivion. My essays were buried among the essays upon liberty, eastern tales, and cures for the bite of a mad dog; while Philautus, Philalethes, Phileleutheros, and Philanthropos, all wrote better, because they wrote faster, than I.'

'Now, therefore, I began to associate with none but

disappointed authors like myself, who praised, deplored, and despised each other. The satisfaction we found in every celebrated writer's attempts was inversely as their merits. I found that no genius in another could please me: my unfortunate paradoxes had entirely dried up that source of comfort. I could neither read nor write with satisfaction; for excellence in another was my aversion, and writing was my trade.

'In the midst of these gloomy reflections, as I was one day sitting on a bench in St. James's Park, a young gentleman of distinction, who had been my intimate acquaintance at the university, approached me. We saluted each other with some hesitation, he almost ashamed of being known to one who made so shabby an appearance; and I afraid of a repulse. But my suspicions soon vanished; for Ned Thornhill was at the bottom a very good-natured fellow.'

'What did you say, George?' interrupted I: 'Thornhill! was not that his name? It can certainly be no other than my landlord.'—'Bless me!' cried Mrs. Arnold, 'is Mr. Thornhill so near a neighbour of yours? He has long been a friend in our family, and we expect a visit from him shortly.'

'My friend's first care,' continued my son, 'was to alter my appearance by a very fine suit of his own clothes, and then I was admitted to his table upon the footing of half friend, half underling. My business was to attend him at auctions, to put him in spirits when he sat for his picture, to take the left hand in his chariot when not filled by another, and to assist at tattering a kip, as the phrase was, when he had a mind for a frolic. Besides this, I had twenty other little employments in the family. I was to do many small things without bidding; to carry the cork-screw; to stand godfather to all the butler's children; to sing when I was bid; to be never out of humour; always to be humble; and, if I could, to be very happy.'

'In this honourable post, however, I was not without a rival. A captain of marines, who was formed for the place by nature, opposed me in my patron's affections,

His mother had been laundress to a man of quality, and thus he early acquired a taste for pimping and pedigree. As this gentleman made it the study of his life to be acquainted with lords, though he was dismissed from several for his stupidity, yet he found many of them, who were as dull as himself, that permitted his assiduities. As flattery was his trade, he practised it with the easiest address imaginable; but it came awkward and stiff from me; and as every day my patron's desire of flattery increased, so every hour, being better acquainted with his defects, I became more unwilling to give it. Thus I was once more fairly going to give up the field to the captain, when my friend found occasion for my assistance. This was nothing less than to fight a duel for him with a gentleman, whose sister it was pretended he had used ill: I readily complied with his request; and, though I see you are displeased at my conduct, yet, as it was a debt indispensably due to friendship, I could not refuse. I undertook the affair, disarmed my antagonist, and soon after had the pleasure of finding that the lady was only a woman of the town, and the fellow her bully, and a sharper. This piece of service was repaid with the warmest professions of gratitude; but as my friend was to leave town in a few days, he knew no other method of serving me, but by recommending me to his uncle, Sir William Thornhill, and another nobleman of great distinction, who enjoyed a post under government. When he was gone, my first care was to carry his recommendatory letter to his uncle, a man whose character for every virtue was universal, yet just. I was received by his servants with the most hospitable smiles; for the looks of the domestics ever transmit their master's benevolence. Being shown into a grand apartment, where Sir William soon came to me, I delivered my message and letter, which he read, and, after pausing some minutes,—Pray, sir, cried he, inform me what you have done for my kinsman, to deserve this warm recommendation. But I suppose, sir, I guess your merits; you have fought for him; and so you would expect a reward from me for being the instrument of his vices. I wish, sincerely wish,

that my present refusal may be some punishment for your guilt, but still more that it may be some inducement to your repentance. The severity of this rebuke I bore patiently, because I knew it was just. My whole expectations now, therefore, lay in my letter to the great man. As the doors of the nobility are almost ever beset with beggars, all ready to thrust in some sly petition, I found it no easy matter to gain admittance. However, after bribing the servants with half my worldly fortune, I was at last shown into a spacious apartment, my letter being previously sent up for his lordship's inspection. During this anxious interval, I had full time to look around me. Every thing was grand, and of happy contrivance; the paintings, the furniture, the gildings, petrified me with awe, and raised my idea of the owner. Ah! thought I to myself, how very great must the possessor of all these things be, who carries in his head the business of the state, and whose house displays half the wealth of a kingdom! sure his genius must be unfathomable! During these awful reflections, I heard a step come heavily forward. Ah, this is the great man himself! No, it was only a chambermaid. Another foot was heard soon after. This must be he! No, it was only the great man's valet-de-chambre. At last his lordship actually made his appearance. Are you, cried he, the bearer of this here letter? I answered with a bow. I learn by this, continued he, as how that—But, just at that instant, a servant delivered him a card; and, without taking farther notice, he went out of the room, and left me to digest my own happiness at leisure. I saw no more of him, till told by a footman that his lordship was going to his coach at the door. Down I immediately followed, and joined my voice to that of three or four more, who came like me to petition for favours. His lordship, however, went too fast for us, and was gaining his chariot-door with large strides, when I hallooed out to know if I was to have any reply. He was by this time got in, and muttered an answer, half of which I only heard, the other half was lost in the rattling of his chariot-wheels. I stood for some time with my neck



stretched out, in the posture of one that was listening to catch the glorious sounds, till, looking round me, I found myself alone at his lordship's gate.

'My patience,' continued my son, 'was now quite exhausted. Stung with the thousand indignities I had met with, I was willing to cast myself away, and only wanted the gulf to receive me. I regarded myself as one of those vile things that Nature designed should be thrown by into her lumber-room, there to perish in obscurity. I had still, however, half-a-guinea left, and of that I thought Fortune herself should not deprive me; but, in order to be sure of this, I was resolved to go instantly and spend it while I had it, and then trust to occurrences for the rest. As I was going along with this resolution, it happened that Mr. Crispe's office seemed invitingly open to give me a welcome reception. In this office Mr. Crispe kindly offers all his majesty's subjects a generous promise of 30*l.* a year, for which promise all they give in return is their liberty for life, and permission to let him transport them to America as slaves. I was happy at finding a place where I could lose my fears in desperation; and entered this cell (for it had the appearance of one) with the devotion of a monastic. Here I found a number of poor creatures all in circumstances like myself, expecting the arrival of Mr. Crispe, presenting a true epitome of English impatience. Each untractable soul at variance with fortune wreaked her injuries on their own hearts; but Mr. Crispe at last came down, and all our murmurs were hushed. He deigned to regard me with an air of peculiar approbation; and indeed he was the first man, who, for a month past, talked to me with smiles. After a few questions, he found I was fit for every thing in the world. He paused awhile upon the properest means of providing for me; and, slapping his forehead, as if he had found it, assured me that there was at that time an embassy talked of from the synod of Pennsylvania to the Chickasaw Indians, and that he would use his interest to get me made secretary. I knew in my own heart the fellow lied, and yet his promise gave me pleasure, there was something so magnifi-

cent in the sound. I fairly, therefore, divided my half-guinea, one half of which went to be added to his thirty thousand pounds, and with the other half I resolved to go to the next tavern, to be there more happy than he.

‘As I was going out with that resolution, I was met at the door by the captain of a ship, with whom I had formerly some little acquaintance, and he agreed to be my companion over a bowl of punch. As I never chose to make a secret of my circumstances, he assured me that I was on the very point of ruin, in listening to the office-keeper’s promises; for that he only designed to sell me to the plantations. But, continued he, I fancy you might, by a much shorter voyage, be very easily put into a genteel way of bread. Take my advice. My ship sails to-morrow for Amsterdam: what if you go in her as a passenger? The moment you land, all you have to do is to teach the Dutchmen English, and I warrant you’ll get pupils and money enough. I suppose you understand English, added he, by this time, or the deuce is in it. I confidently assured him of that; but expressed a doubt whether the Dutch would be willing to learn English. He affirmed, with an oath, that they were fond of it to distraction; and upon that affirmation I agreed with his proposal, and embarked the next day to teach the Dutch English in Holland. The wind was fair, and our voyage short; and after having paid my passage with half my moveables, I found myself fallen as from the skies, a stranger in one of the principal streets of Amsterdam. In this situation I was unwilling to let any time pass unemployed in teaching. I addressed myself, therefore, to two or three of those I met, whose appearance seemed most promising; but it was impossible to make ourselves mutually understood. It was not till this very moment that I recollected, that in order to teach Dutchmen English, it was necessary that they should first teach me Dutch. How I came to overlook so obvious an objection, is to me amazing; but, certain it is, I overlooked it.

‘This scheme thus blown up, I had some thoughts of fairly shipping back to England again; but, dropping into company with an Irish student, who was returning

from Louvain, our conversation turning upon topics of literature, (for, by the way, it may be observed, that I always forgot the meanness of my circumstances when I could converse on such subjects) from him I learned, that there were not two men in his whole university who understood Greek. This amazed me: I instantly resolved to travel to Louvain, and there live by teaching Greek; and in this design I was heartened by my brother-student, who threw out some hints that a fortune might be got by it.

‘I set boldly forward the next morning. Every day lessened the burden of my moveables, like *Æsop* and his basket of bread; for I paid for my lodgings to the Dutch as I travelled on. When I came to Louvain, I was resolved not to go sneaking to the lower professors, but openly tendered my talents to the principal himself. I went, had admittance, and offered him my service as a master of the Greek language, which I had been told was a desideratum in his university. The principal seemed, at first, to doubt my abilities; but of these I offered to convince him, by turning a part of any Greek author he should fix upon into Latin. Finding me perfectly earnest in my proposal, he addressed me thus: You see me, young man: I never learned Greek, and I don’t find that I ever missed it. I have had a doctor’s cap and gown without Greek; I have ten thousand florins a year without Greek; I eat heartily without Greek; and, in short, continued he, as I don’t know Greek, I do not believe there is any good in it.

‘I was now too far from home to think of returning, so I resolved to go forward. I had some knowledge of music, with a tolerable voice: I now turned what was once my amusement into a present means of subsistence. I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry; for I ever found them sprightly in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant’s house towards night-fall, I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice attempted to

play for people of fashion ; but they always thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me even with a trifle. This was to me the more extraordinary, as, whenever I used in better days to play for company, when playing was my amusement, my music never failed to throw them into raptures, and the ladies especially ; but, as it was now my only means, it was received with contempt ;—a proof, how ready the world is to underrate those talents by which a man is supported.

‘ In this manner I proceeded to Paris, with no design but just to look about me, and then to go forward. The people of Paris are much fonder of strangers that have money than of those who have wit : as I could not boast much of either, I was no great favourite. After walking about the town four or five days, and seeing the out-sides of the best houses, I was preparing to leave this retreat of venal hospitality ; when, passing through one of the principal streets, whom should I meet but our cousin, to whom you first recommended me ! This meeting was very agreeable to me, and I believe not displeasing to him. He inquired into the nature of my journey to Paris, and informed me of his own business there, which was to collect pictures, medals, intaglios, and antiques of all kinds, for a gentleman in London, who had just stepped into taste and a large fortune. I was the more surprised at seeing our cousin pitched upon for this office, as he himself had often assured me he knew nothing of the matter. Upon asking how he had been taught the art of a *connoscento* so very suddenly, he assured me that nothing was more easy : the whole secret consisted in a strict adherence to two rules ; the one, always to observe that the picture might have been better if the painter had taken more pains ; and the other, to praise the works of Pietro Perugino. But, says he, as I once taught you how to be an author in London, I’ll now undertake to instruct you in the art of picture-buying in Paris.

‘ With this proposal I very readily closed, as it was living ; and now all my ambition was to live. I went therefore to his lodgings, improving my dress by his as-

assistance ; and, after some time, accompanied him to auctions of pictures, where the English gentry were expected to be purchasers. I was not a little surprised with his intimacy with people of the best fashion, who referred themselves to his judgment upon every picture or medal, as an unerring standard of taste. He made very good use of my assistance upon these occasions ; for, when asked his opinion, he would gravely take me aside, and ask mine, shrug, look wise, return, and assure the company that he could give no opinion upon an affair of so much importance. Yet there was sometimes an occasion for a more supported assurance. I remember to have seen him, after giving his opinion that the colouring of a picture was not mellow enough, very deliberately take a brush with brown varnish, that was accidentally by, and rub it over the piece with great composure before all the company, and then ask if he had not improved the tints.

When he had finished his commission in Paris, he left me strongly recommended to several men of distinction, as a person very proper for a travelling-tutor ; and, after some time, I was employed in that capacity by a gentleman who brought his ward to Paris, in order to set him forward on his tour through Europe. I was to be the young gentleman's governor, but with a proviso that he should always govern himself. My pupil, in fact, understood the art of guiding in money concerns much better than I. He was heir to a fortune of about two hundred thousand pounds, left him by an uncle in the West Indies ; and his guardians, to qualify him for the management of it, had bound him apprentice to an attorney. Thus avarice was his prevailing passion : all his questions on the road were, How much money might be saved ? which was the least expensive course of travelling ? whether any thing could be bought, that would turn to account when disposed of again in London ? Such curiosities on the way as could be seen for nothing, he was ready enough to look at ; but if the sight of them was to be paid for, he usually asserted that he had been told they were not worth seeing. He never paid a bill, that he would not observe, how amazingly expensive

travelling was ; and all this, though he was not yet twenty-one. When arrived at Leghorn, as we took a walk to look at the port and shipping, he inquired the expense of the passage by sea home to England. This he was informed was but a trifle, compared to his returning by land : he was therefore unable to withstand the temptation ; so, paying me the small part of my salary that was due, he took leave, and embarked with only one attendant for London.

‘ I now therefore was left once more upon the world at large ; but then it was a thing I was used to. However, my skill in music could avail me nothing in a country where every peasant was a better musician than I ; but by this time I had acquired another talent, which answered my purpose as well, and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign universities and convents there are, upon certain days, philosophical theses maintained against every adventitious disputant ; for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, therefore, I fought my way towards England ; walked along from city to city ; examined mankind more nearly ; and, if I may so express it, saw both sides of the picture. My remarks, however, are but few : I found that monarchy was the best government for the poor to live in, and commonwealths for the rich : I found that riches in general were in every country another name for freedom ; and that no man is so fond of liberty himself, as not to be desirous of subjecting the will of some individuals in society to his own.

‘ Upon my arrival in England, I resolved to pay my respects first to you, and then to enlist as a volunteer in the first expedition that was going forward ; but, on my journey down, my resolutions were changed by meeting an old acquaintance, who I found belonged to a company of comedians, that were going to make a summer campaign in the country. The company seemed not much to disapprove of me for an associate. They all, however, apprised me of the importance of the task at which I aimed ; that the public was a many-headed monster,

and that only such as had very good heads could please it; that acting was not to be learned in a day; and that, without some traditional shrugs, which had been on the stage, and only on the stage, these hundred years, I could never pretend to please. The next difficulty was in fitting me with parts, as almost every character was in keeping. I was driven for some time from one character to another, till at last Horatio was fixed upon, which the presence of the present company has happily hindered me from acting.'

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CHAP. XXI.—The short continuance of friendship among the vicious, which is coeval only with mutual satisfaction.

My son's account was too long to be delivered at once; the first part of it was begun that night, and he was concluding the rest after dinner the next day, when the appearance of Mr. Thornhill's equipage at the door seemed to make a pause in the general satisfaction. The butler, who was now become my friend in the family, informed me, with a whisper, that the squire had already made some overtures to Miss Wilmot, and that her aunt and uncle seemed highly to approve the match. Upon Mr. Thornhill's entering, he seemed, at seeing my son and me, to start back; but I readily imputed that to surprise, and not displeasure. However, upon our advancing to salute him, he returned our greeting with the most apparent candour; and, after a short time, his presence seemed only to increase the general good-humour.

After tea, he called me aside, to inquire after my daughter; but, upon my informing him that my inquiry was unsuccessful, he seemed greatly surprised; adding, that he had been since frequently at my house, in order to comfort the rest of the family, whom he left perfectly well. He then asked if I had communicated her misfortune to Miss Wilmot or my son; and, upon my replying that I had not told them as yet, he greatly approved my prudence and precaution, desiring me, by all means, to

keep it a secret : 'for at best,' cried he, 'it is but divulging one's own infamy ; and perhaps Miss Livy may not be so guilty as we all imagine.' We were here interrupted by a servant, who came to ask the squire in to stand up at country-dances ; so that he left me quite pleased with the interest he seemed to take in my concerns. His addresses, however, to Miss Wilmot, were too obvious to be mistaken ; and yet she seemed not perfectly pleased, but bore them rather in compliance to the will of her aunt, than from real inclination. I had even the satisfaction to see her lavish some kind looks upon my unfortunate son, which the other could neither extort by his fortune nor assiduity. Mr. Thornhill's seeming composure, however, not a little surprised me : we had now continued here a week, at the pressing instances of Mr. Arnold ; but each day, the more tenderness Miss Wilmot showed my son, Mr. Thornhill's friendship seemed proportionably to increase for him.

He had formerly made us the most kind assurances of using his interest to serve the family ; but now his generosity was not confined to promises alone. The morning I designed for my departure, Mr. Thornhill came to me, with looks of real pleasure, to inform me of a piece of service he had done for his friend George. This was nothing less than his having procured him an ensign's commission in one of the regiments that were going to the West Indies, for which he had promised but one hundred pounds, his interest being sufficient to get an abatement of the other two :—'As for this trifling piece of service,' continued the young gentleman, 'I desire no other reward but the pleasure of having served my friend ; and as for the hundred pounds to be paid, if you are unable to raise it yourselves, I will advance it, and you shall repay me at your leisure.' This was a favour we wanted words to express our sense of : I readily, therefore, gave my bond for the money, and testified as much gratitude as if I never intended to pay.

George was to depart for town the next day, to secure his commission, in pursuance of his generous patron's directions, who judged it highly expedient to use despatch,



lest, in the mean time, another should step in with more advantageous proposals. The next morning, therefore, our young soldier was early prepared for his departure, and seemed the only person among us that was not affected by it. Neither the fatigues and dangers he was going to encounter, nor the friends and mistress (for Miss Wilmot actually loved him) he was leaving behind, any way damped his spirits. After he had taken leave of the rest of the company, I gave him all that I had,—my blessing: ‘And now, my boy,’ cried I, ‘thou art going to fight for thy country: remember how thy brave grandfather fought for his sacred king, when loyalty among Britons was a virtue. Go, my boy, and imitate him in all but his misfortunes,—if it was a misfortune to die with Lord Falkland. Go, my boy; and if you fall, though distant, exposed, and unwept by those that love you, the most precious tears are those with which Heaven bedews the unburied head of a soldier.’

The next morning I took leave of the good family, that had been kind enough to entertain me so long, not without several expressions of gratitude to Mr. Thornhill for his late bounty. I left them in the enjoyment of all that happiness which affluence and good breeding procure, and returned towards home, despairing of ever finding my daughter more, but sending a sigh to Heaven to spare and forgive her. I was now come within about twenty miles of home, having hired a horse to carry me, as I was yet but weak; and comforted myself with the hopes of soon seeing all I held dearest upon earth. But the night coming on, I put up at a little public house by the roadside, and asked for the landlord’s company over a pint of wine. We sat beside his kitchen fire, which was the best room in the house, and chatted on politics and the news of the country. We happened, among other topics, to talk of young squire Thornhill, who, the host assured me, was hated, as much as his uncle, sir William, who sometimes came down to the country, was loved. He went on to observe, that he made it his whole study to betray the daughters of such as received him to their houses, and after a fortnight or three weeks’ possession turned them

out untrewarded and abandoned to the world. As we continued our discourse in this manner, his wife, who had been out to get change, returned, and, perceiving that her husband was enjoying a pleasure in which she was not a sharer, she asked him, in an angry tone, what he did there; to which he only replied in an ironical way, by drinking her health. 'Mr. Symonds,' cried she, 'you use me very ill, and I'll bear it no longer. Here three parts of the business is left for me to do, and the fourth left unfinished, while you do nothing but soak with the guests all day long; whereas, if a spoonful of liquor were to cure me of a fever, I never touch a drop.' I now found what she would be at, and immediately poured out a glass, which she received with a courtesy, and, drinking towards my good health, 'Sir,' resumed she, 'it is not so much for the value of the liquor I am angry, but one cannot help it when the house is going out of the windows. If the customers or guests are to be dunned, all the burden lies upon my back; he'd as lief eat that glass as budge after them himself. There now, above stairs, we have a young woman who has come to take up her lodgings here, and I don't believe she has got any money, by her over-civility: I am certain she is very slow of payment, and I wish she were put in mind of it.'—'What signifies minding her?' cried the host; 'if she be slow, she is sure.'—'I don't know that,' replied the wife; 'but I know that I am sure she has been here a fortnight, and we have not yet seen the cross of her money.'—'I suppose, my dear,' cried he, 'we shall have it all in a lump.'—'In a lump?' cried the other: 'I hope we may get it anyway; and that I am resolved we will this very night, or out she tramps, bag and baggage.'—'Consider, my dear,' cried the husband, 'she is a gentlewoman, and deserves more respect.'—'As for the matter of that,' returned the hostess, 'gentle or simple, out she shall pack with a sussarara. Gentry may be good things where they take; but for my part I never saw much good of them at the sign of the Harrow.' Thus saying, she ran up a narrow flight of stairs that went from the kitchen to a room over-head, and I soon perceived, by the loudness of

her voice, and the bitterness of her reproaches, that no money was to be had from her lodger. I could hear the remonstrances very distinctly : ' Out, I say, pack out this moment ! tramp, thou infamous strumpet, or I'll give thee a mark thou won't be the better for these three months. What ! you trumpery, to come and take up an honest house, without cross or coin to bless yourself with ! come along, I say.'—' O dear madam,' cried the stranger : ' pity me, pity a poor abandoned creature, for one night, and death will soon do the rest.' I instantly knew the voice of my poor ruined child, Olivia. I flew to her rescue, while the woman was dragging her along by the hair, and I caught the dear, forlorn wretch in my arms. ' Welcome, any way welcome, my dearest lost one, my treasure, to your poor old father's bosom. Though the vicious forsake thee, there is yet one in the world that will never forsake thee ; though thou hast ten thousand crimes to answer for, he will forgive them all.'—' O my own dear,'—for minutes she could say no more, ' my own dearest, good papa ! Could angels be kinder ? How do I deserve so much ? ' The villain, I hate him ; and myself, to be a reproach to so much goodness. You can't forgive me ; I know you cannot.'—' Yes, my child, from my heart I do forgive thee : only repent, and we both shall yet be happy. We shall see many pleasant days yet, my Olivia.'—' Ah ! never, sir, never. The rest of my wretched life must be infamy abroad, and shame at home. But, alas ! papa, you look much paler than you used to do. Could such a thing as I am give you so much uneasiness ? Surely you have too much wisdom to take the miseries of my guilt upon yourself ! '—' Our wisdom, young woman,——' replied I. ' Ah, why so cold a name, papa ? ' cried she : ' this is the first time you ever called me by so cold a name.'—' I ask pardon, my darling,' returned I ; ' but I was going to observe, that wisdom makes but a slow defence against trouble, though at last a sure one.'

The landlady now returned, to know if we did not choose a more genteel apartment ; to which assenting, we were shown to a room where we could converse more

freely. After we had talked ourselves into some degree of tranquillity, I could not avoid desiring some account of the gradations that led to her present wretched situation. 'That villain, sir,' said she, 'from the first day of our meeting, made me honourable, though private proposals.'

'Villain, indeed,' cried I; 'and yet it in some measure surprises me, how a person of Mr. Burchell's good sense and seeming honour could be guilty of such deliberate baseness, and thus step into a family to undo it.'

'My dear papa,' returned my daughter, 'you labour under a strange mistake. Mr. Burchell never attempted to deceive me: instead of that, he took every opportunity of privately admonishing me against the artifices of Mr. Thornhill, who, I now find, was even worse than he represented him.'—'Mr. Thornhill!' interrupted I: 'can it be?'—'Yes, sir,' returned she; 'it was Mr. Thornhill who seduced me; who employed the two ladies, as he called them, but who in fact were abandoned women of the town, without breeding or pity, to decoy us up to London. Their artifices, you may remember, would have certainly succeeded, but for Mr. Burchell's letter, who directed those reproaches at them, which we all applied to ourselves. How he came to have so much influence as to defeat their intentions, still remains a secret to me; but I am convinced he was ever our warmest, sincerest friend.'

'You amaze me, my dear,' cried I; 'but now I find my first suspicions of Mr. Thornhill's baseness were too well grounded: but he can triumph in security; for he is rich, and we are poor. But tell me, my child; sure, it was no small temptation, that could thus obliterate all the impressions of such an education, and so virtuous a disposition, as thine!'

'Indeed, sir,' replied she, 'he owes all his triumph to the desire I had of making him, and not myself happy. I knew that the ceremony of our marriage, which was privately performed by a popish priest, was no way binding, and that I had nothing to trust to but his honour.'—'What!' interrupted I: 'and were you indeed married

by a priest in orders?"—"Indeed, sir, we were," replied she, "though we were both sworn to conceal his name."—"Why then, my child, come to my arms again; and now you are a thousand times more welcome than before; for you are his wife to all intents and purposes; nor can all the laws of man, though written upon tables of adamant, lessen the force of that sacred connexion."

"Alas! papa," replied she, "you are but little acquainted with his villainies: he has been married already, by the same priest, to six or eight wives more, whom, like me, he has deceived and abandoned."

"Has he so?" cried I: "then we must hang the priest, and you shall inform against him to-morrow."—"But, air," returned she, "will that be right, when I am sworn to secresy?"—"My dear," I replied, "if you have made such a promise, I cannot, nor will I, tempt you to break it. Even though it may benefit the public, you must not inform against him. In all human institutions, a smaller evil is allowed to procure a greater good; as, in politics, a province may be given away to secure a kingdom; in medicine, a limb may be lopped off to preserve the body: but in religion the law is written, and inflexible, never to do evil. And this law, my child, is right; for otherwise, if we commit a smaller evil to procure a greater good, certain guilt would be thus incurred, in expectation of contingent advantage; and though the advantage should certainly follow, yet the interval between commission and advantage, which is allowed to be guilty, may be that in which we are called away to answer for the things we have done, and the volume of human actions is closed for ever. But I interrupt you, my dear: go on."

"The very next morning," continued she, "I found what little expectation I was to have from his sincerity. That very morning he introduced me to two unhappy women more, whom, like me, he had deceived, but who lived in contented prostitution. I loved him too tenderly to bear such rivals in his affections, and strove to forget my infamy in a tumult of pleasures. With this view, I danced, dressed, and talked; but still was unhappy. The gentlemen who visited there told me every moment

of the power of my charms, and this only contributed to increase my melancholy, as I had thrown all their power quite away. Thus each day I grew more pensive, and he more insolent, till at last the monster had the assurance to offer me to a young baronet of his acquaintance. Need I describe, sir, how his ingratitude stung me? My answer to this proposal was almost madness. I desired to part. As I was going, he offered me a purse; but I flung it at him with indignation, and burst from him in a rage, that for a while kept me insensible of the miseries of my situation: but I soon looked round me, and saw myself a vile, abject, guilty thing, without one friend in the world to apply to. Just in that interval, a stage-coach happening to pass by, I took a place, it being my only aim to be driven at a distance from a wretch I despised and detested. I was set down here; where, since my arrival, my own anxiety, and this woman's unkindness, have been my only companions. The hours of pleasure that I have passed with my mamma and sister now grow painful to me: their sorrows are much; but mine are greater than theirs; for mine are mixed with guilt and infamy.'

'Have patience, my child,' cried I, 'and I hope things will yet be better. Take some repose to-night, and to-morrow I'll carry you home to your mother and the rest of the family, from whom you will receive a kind reception. Poor woman! this has gone to her heart: but she loves you still, Olivia, and will forget it.'

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CHAP. XXII.—Offences are easily pardoned where there is love at bottom.

The next morning I took my daughter behind me, and set out on my return home. As we travelled along, I strove by every persuasion to calm her sorrows and fears, and to arm her with resolution to bear the presence of her offended mother. I took every opportunity, from the prospect of a fine country, through which we passed, to

observe how much kinder Heaven was to us than we to each other; and that the misfortunes of nature's making were but very few. I assured her, that she should never perceive any change in my affections; and that during my life, which yet might be long, she might depend upon a guardian and an instructor. I armed her against the censure of the world; showed her that books were sweet; unrepublishing companions to the miserable; and that if they could not bring us to enjoy life, they would at least teach us to endure it.

The hired horse that we rode was to be put up that night at the inn by the way, within about five miles from my house; and as I was willing to prepare my family for my daughter's reception, I determined to leave her that night at the inn, and to return for her, accompanied by my daughter Sophia, early the next morning. It was night before we reached our appointed stage: however, after seeing her provided with a decent apartment, and having ordered the hostess to prepare proper refreshments, I kissed her, and proceeded towards home. And now my heart caught new sensations of pleasure, the nearer I approached that peaceful mansion: as a bird that had been frightened from its nest, my affections outwent my haste, and hovered round my little fire-side with all the rapture of expectation. I called up the many fond things I had to say, and anticipated the welcome I was to receive; I already felt my wife's tender embrace, and smiled at the joy of my little ones. As I walked but slowly, the night waned apace; the labourers of the day were all retired to rest; the lights were out in every cottage; no sounds were heard but of the shrilling cock, and the deep-mouthed watch-dog, at hollow distance. I approached my little abode of pleasure; and before I was within a furlong of the place, our honest mastiff came running to welcome me.

It was now near midnight that I came to knock at my door: all was still and silent: my heart dilated with unutterable happiness; when, to my amazement, I saw the house bursting out into a blaze of fire, and every aperture red with conflagration. I gave a loud convulsive outcry,

and fell upon the pavement insensible. This alarmed my son, who had, till this, been asleep; and he, perceiving the flame, instantly awakened my wife and daughter; and all running out, naked, and wild with apprehension, recalled me to life with their anguish: but it was only to objects of new terror; for the flames had by this time caught the roof of our dwelling, part after part continuing to fall in, while the family stood with silent agony looking on, as if they enjoyed the blaze. I gazed upon them and upon it by turns, and then looked round me for my two little ones; but they were not to be seen. 'O misery! where,' cried I, 'where are my little ones?'—'They are burnt to death in the flames,' said my wife calmly, 'and I will die with them.' That moment I heard the cry of the babes within, who were just awakened by the fire, and nothing could have stopped me. 'Where, where are my children?' cried I, rushing through the flames, and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined: 'where are my little ones?'—'Here, dear papa, here we are!' cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and conveyed them through the fire as fast as possible, while, just as I was going out, the roof sunk in. 'Now,' cried I, holding up my children, 'now let the flames burn on, and all my possessions perish: here they are; I have saved my treasures: here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall be happy.' We kissed our little darlings a thousand times: they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports; while their mother laughed and wept by turns.

I now stood a calm spectator of the flames, and, after some time, began to perceive that my arm to the shoulder was scorched in a terrible manner: it was, therefore, out of my power to give my son any assistance, either in attempting to save our goods, or preventing the flames spreading to our corn. By this time the neighbours were alarmed, and came running to our assistance; but all they could do was to stand, like us, spectators of the calamity. My goods, among which were the notes I had reserved



for my daughters' fortunes, were entirely consumed, except a box with some papers, that stood in the kitchen, and two or three things more of little consequence, which my son brought away in the beginning. The neighbours contributed, however, what they could to lighten our distress: they brought us clothes, and furnished one of our out-houses with kitchen utensils; so that by day-light we had another, though a wretched dwelling, to retire to. My honest next neighbour and his children were not the least assiduous in providing us with every thing necessary, and offering whatever consolation untutored benevolence could suggest.

When the fears of my family had subsided, curiosity to know the cause of my long stay began to take place: having, therefore, informed them of every particular, I proceeded to prepare them for the reception of our lost one; and though we had nothing but wretchedness now to impart, I was willing to procure her a welcome to what we had. This task would have been more difficult, but for our own recent calamity, which had humbled my wife's pride, and blunted it by more poignant afflictions. Being unable to go for my poor child myself, as my arm grew very painful, I sent my son and daughter, who soon returned, supporting the wretched delinquent, who had not the courage to look up at her mother, whom no instructions of mine could persuade to a perfect reconciliation; for women have a much stronger sense of female error than men. 'Ah, madam!' cried her mother, 'this is but a poor place you are come to after so much finery. My daughter Sophy and I can afford but little entertainment to persons who have kept company only with people of distinction: yes, Miss Livy, your poor father and I have suffered very much of late; but I hope Heaven will forgive you.' During this reception, the unhappy victim stood pale and trembling, unable to weep or to reply: but I could not continue a silent spectator of her distress; wherefore, assuming a degree of severity in my voice and manner, which was ever followed with instant submission, 'I entreat, woman, that my words may be now marked once for all: I have here brought you back a poor de-

Indeed wanderer: her return to duty demands the revival of our tenderness. The real hardships of life are now coming fast upon us; let us not, therefore, increase them by dissensions among each other: if we live harmoniously together, we may yet be contented, as there are enough of us to shut out the censuring world, and keep each other in countenance. The kindness of Heaven is promised to the penitent, and let ours be directed by the example. Heaven, we are assured, is much more pleased to view a repentant sinner than ninety-nine persons who have supported a course of undeviating rectitude: and this is right; for that single effort, by which we stop short in the down-hill path to perdition, is of itself a greater exertion of virtue than a hundred acts of justice.'

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CHAP. XXIII.—None but the guilty can be long and completely miserable.

Some assiduity was now required to make our present abode as convenient as possible, and we were soon again qualified to enjoy our former serenity. Being disabled myself from assisting my son in our usual occupations, I read to my family from the few books that were saved, and particularly from such, as, by amusing the imagination, contributed to ease the heart. Our good neighbours, too, came every day with the kindest condolence, and fixed a time in which they were all to assist in repairing my former dwelling. Honest farmer Williams was not last among these visitors, but heartily offered his friendship: he would even have renewed his addresses to my daughter; but she rejected them in such a manner as totally repressed his future solicitations. Her grief seemed formed for continuing, and she was the only person in our little society that a week did not restore to cheerfulness. She now lost that unblushing innocence, which once taught her to respect herself, and to seek pleasure by pleasing. Anxiety had now taken strong possession of her mind; her beauty began to be impaired with her constitution,

and neglect still more contributed to diminish it. Every tender epithet bestowed on her sister brought a pang to her heart, and a tear to her eye; and as one vice, though cured, ever plants others where it has been; so her former guilt, though driven out by repentance, left jealousy and envy behind. I strove a thousand ways to lessen her care, and even forgot my own pain in a concern for hers; collecting such amusing passages of history as a strong memory and some reading could suggest. 'Our happiness, my dear,' I would say, 'is in the power of One, who can bring it about in a thousand unforeseen ways, that mock our foresight. If example be necessary to prove this, I'll give you a story, my child, told us by a grave, though sometimes a romancing historian.

'Matilda was married very young to a Neapolitan nobleman of the first quality, and found herself a widow and a mother at the age of fifteen. As she stood one day caressing her infant son in the open window of an apartment, which hung over the river Volturna, the child, with a sudden spring, leaped from her arms into the flood below, and disappeared in a moment. The mother, struck with instant surprise, and making an effort to save him, plunged in after; but, far from being able to assist the infant, she herself with great difficulty escaped to the opposite shore, just when some French soldiers were plundering the country on that side, who immediately made her their prisoner.

'As the war was then carried on between the French and Italians with the utmost inhumanity, they were going at once to perpetrate those two extremes suggested by appetite and cruelty. This base resolution, however, was opposed by a young officer, who, though his retreat required the utmost expedition, placed her behind him, and brought her in safety to his native city. Her beauty at first caught his eye; her merit, soon after, his heart: they were married; he rose to the highest posts; they lived long together, and were happy. But the felicity of a soldier can never be called permanent: after an interval of several years, the troops which he commanded having met with a repulse, he was obliged to take shelter in the

city where he had lived with his wife. Here they suffered a siege, and the city at length was taken. Few histories can produce more various instances of cruelty than those which the French and Italians at that time exercised upon each other. It was resolved by the victors, upon this occasion, to put all the French prisoners to death; but particularly the husband of the unfortunate Matilda, as he was principally instrumental in protracting the siege. Their determinations were, in general, executed almost as soon as resolved upon. The captive soldier was led forth, and the executioner, with his sword, stood ready, while the spectators, in gloomy silence, awaited the fatal blow, which was only suspended till the general, who presided as judge, should give the signal. It was in this interval of anguish and expectation, that Matilda came to take her last farewell of her husband and deliverer, deploring her wretched situation, and the cruelty of fate, that had saved her from perishing by a premature death in the river Volturna, to be the spectator of still greater calamities. The general, who was a young man, was struck with surprise at her beauty, and pity at her distress; but with still stronger emotions, when he heard her mention her former dangers. He was her son, the infant for whom she had encountered so much danger: he acknowledged her at once as his mother, and fell at her feet. The rest may be easily supposed: the captive was set free; and all the happiness that love, friendship, and duty could confer on earth, were united.

In this manner I would attempt to amuse my daughter; but she listened with divided attention; for her own misfortunes engrossed all the pity she once had for those of another, and nothing gave her ease. In company she dreaded contempt, and in solitude she only found anxiety. Such was the colour of her wretchedness, when we received certain information that Mr. Thornhill was going to be married to Miss Wilmot, for whom I always suspected he had a real passion, though he took every opportunity before me to express his contempt both of her person and fortune. This news served only to increase poor Olivia's affliction; for such a flagrant breach

of fidelity was more than her courage could support. I was resolved, however, to get more certain information; and to defeat, if possible, the completion of his designs, by sending my son to old Wilmot's, with instructions to know the truth of the report, and to deliver Miss Wilmot a letter, intimating Mr. Thornhill's conduct in my family. My son went, in pursuance of my directions, and in three days returned, assuring us of the truth of the account; but that he had found it impossible to deliver the letter, which he was therefore obliged to leave, as Mr. Thornhill and Miss Wilmot were visiting round the country. They were to be married, he said, in a few days, having appeared together at church, the Sunday before he was there, in great splendor, the bride attended by six young ladies, and he by as many gentlemen. Their approaching nuptials filled the whole country with rejoicing, and they usually rode out together in the grandest equipage that had been in the country for many years. All the friends of both families he said, were there, particularly the squire's uncle, Sir William, who bore so good a character. He added, that nothing but mirth and feasting were going forward; that all the country praised the young bride's beauty, and the bridegroom's fine person; and that they were immensely fond of each other; concluding, that he could not help thinking Mr. Thornhill one of the most happy men in the world.

'Why, let him, if he can,' returned I; 'but, my son, observe this bed of straw and unsheltering roof; those mouldering walls and humid floor; my wretched body, thus disabled by fire, and my children weeping around me for bread: you have come home, my child, to all this; yet here, even here, you see a man that would not for a thousand worlds exchange situations. O, my children, if you could but learn to commune with your own hearts, and know what noble company you can make them, you would little regard the elegance and splendor of the worthless. Almost all men have been taught to call life a passage, and themselves the travellers. The similitude still may be improved, when we observe that the good

are joyful and serene, like travellers that are going towards home; the wicked but by intervals happy, like travellers that are going into exile.'

My compassion for my poor daughter, overpowered by this new disaster, interrupted what I had farther to observe. I bade her mother support her, and after a short time she recovered. She appeared from that time more calm, and I imagined had gained a new degree of resolution; but appearances deceived me, for her tranquillity was the languor of overwrought resentment. A supply of provisions, charitably sent us by my kind parishioners, seemed to diffuse new cheerfulness among the rest of my family; nor was I displeased at seeing them once more sprightly and at ease. It would have been unjust to damp their satisfactions, merely to condole with resolute melancholy, or to burden them with a sadness they did not feel. Thus, once more, the tale went round, and a song was demanded, and cheerfulness condescended to hover round our little habitation.

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CHAP. XXIV.—Fresh calamities.

The next morning the sun arose with peculiar warmth for the season, so that we agreed to breakfast together on the honeysuckle bank; where, while we sat, my youngest daughter, at my request, joined her voice to the concert on the trees about us. It was in this place my poor Olivia first met her seducer, and every object served to recal her sadness: but that melancholy, which is excited by objects of pleasure, or inspired by sounds of harmony, soothes the heart instead of corroding it. Her mother, too, upon this occasion, felt a pleasing distress, and wept, and loved her daughter as before. 'Do, my pretty Olivia,' cried she, 'let us have that little melancholy air your papa was so fond of; your sister Sophy has already obliged us. 'Do, child: it will please your old father.' She complied in a manner so exquisitely pathetic, as moved me:—

When lovely woman stoops to folly,  
 And finds, too late, that men betray;  
 What charm can soothe her melancholy?  
 What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,  
 To hide her shame from every eye,  
 To give repentance to her lover,  
 And wring his bosom, is—to die.

As she was concluding the last stanza, to which an interruption in her voice, from sorrow, gave peculiar softness, the appearance of Mr. Thornhill's equipage at a distance alarmed us all, but particularly increased the uneasiness of my eldest daughter, who, desirous of shunning her betrayer, returned to the house with her sister. In a few minutes he was alighted from his chariot, and, making up to the place where I was still sitting, inquired after my health with his usual air of familiarity. 'Sir,' replied I, 'your present assurance only serves to aggravate the baseness of your character; and there was a time when I would have chastised your insolence, for presuming thus to appear before me: but now you are safe; for age has cooled my passions, and my calling restrains them.'

'I vow, my dear sir,' returned he, 'I am amazed at all this; nor can I understand what it means. I hope you do not think your daughter's late excursion with me had any thing criminal in it.'

'Go,' cried I; 'thou art a wretch, a poor, pitiful wretch, and every way a liar; but your meanness secures you from my anger. Yet, sir, I am descended from a family that would not have borne this. And so, thou vile thing, to gratify a momentary passion, thou hast made one poor creature wretched for life, and polluted a family, that had nothing but honour for their portion.'

'If she or you,' returned he, 'are resolved to be miserable, I cannot help it: but you may still be happy; and whatever opinion you may have formed of me, you shall ever find me ready to contribute to it. We can marry her to another in a short time; and, what is more, she may keep her lover beside; for, I protest, I shall ever continue to have a true regard for her.'

I found all my passions alarmed at this new degrading proposal; for though the mind may often be calm under great injuries, little villany can at any time get within the soul, and sting it into rage. 'Avoid my sight, thou reptile,' cried I, 'nor continue to insult me with thy presence. Were my brave son at home, he would not suffer this; but I am old and disabled, and every way undone.'

'I find,' cried he, 'you are bent upon obliging me to talk in a harsher manner than I intended; but as I have shown you what may be hoped from my friendship, it may not be improper to represent what may be the consequence of my resentment. My attorney, to whom your late bond has been transferred, threatens hard; nor do I know how to prevent the course of justice, except by paying the money myself; which, as I have been at some expenses lately, previous to my intended marriage, is not so easy to be done. And then my steward talks of driving for the rent: it is certain he knows his duty; for I never trouble myself with affairs of that nature. Yet still I could wish to serve you, and even to have you and your daughter present at my marriage, which is shortly to be solemnized with Miss Wilmot: it is even the request of my charming Arabella herself, whom I hope you will not refuse.'

'Mr. Thornhill,' replied I, 'hear me once for all: as to your marriage with any but my daughter, that I never will consent to; and though your friendship could raise me to a throne, or your resentment sink me to the grave, yet would I despise both. Thou hast once wofully, irreparably deceived me: I reposed my heart upon thine honour, and have found its baseness. Never more, therefore, expect friendship from me. Go, and possess what fortune has given thee—beauty, riches, health, and pleasure: go, and leave me to want, infamy, disease, and sorrow; yet, humbled as I am, shall my heart still vindicate its dignity; and though thou hast my forgiveness, thou shalt ever have my contempt.'

'If so,' returned he, 'depend upon it, you shall feel the effects of this insolence, and we shall shortly see



which is the fittest object of scorn, you or I.' Upon which, he departed abruptly.

My wife and son, who were present at this interview, seemed terrified with apprehension : my daughters also, finding that he was gone, came out to be informed of the result of our conference ; which, when known, alarmed them not less than the rest. But as to myself, I disregarded the utmost stretch of his malevolence : he had already struck the blow ; and I now stood prepared to repel every new effort, like one of those instruments used in the art of war, which, however thrown, still present a point to receive the enemy.

We soon, however, found that he had not threatened in vain ; for the very next morning his steward came to demand my annual rent, which, by the train of accidents already related, I was unable to pay. The consequence of my incapacity was, his driving my cattle that evening, and their being appraised and sold the next day for less than half their value. My wife and children now, therefore, entreated me to comply upon any terms, rather than incur certain destruction : they even begged of me to admit his visits once more, and used all their little eloquence to paint the calamities I was going to endure ; the terrors of a prison in so rigorous a season as the present, with the danger that threatened my health from the late accident that happened by the fire : but I continued inflexible.

' Why, my treasures,' cried I, ' why will you thus attempt to persuade me to the thing that is not right ? My duty has taught me to forgive him, but my conscience will not permit me to approve. Would you have me applaud to the world what my heart must internally condemn ? Would you have me tamely sit down and flatter our infamous betrayer ; and, to avoid a prison, continually suffer the more galling bonds of mental confinement ? No, never. If we are to be taken from this abode, only let us hold to the right ; and wherever we are thrown, we can still retire to a charming apartment, where we can look round our own hearts with intrepidity and with pleasure.'

In this manner we spent that evening. Early the next morning, as the snow had fallen in great abundance in the night, my son was employed in clearing it away, and opening a passage before the door. He had not been thus engaged long, when he came running in, with looks all pale, to tell us that two strangers, whom he knew to be officers of justice, were making towards the house.

Just as he spoke they came in, and, approaching the bed where I lay, after previously informing me of their employment and business, made me their prisoner, bidding me prepare to go with them to the county jail, which was eleven miles off.

'My friends,' said I, 'this is severe weather in which you are come to take me to a prison; and it is particularly unfortunate at this time, as one of my arms has lately been burnt in a terrible manner, and it has thrown me into a slight fever, and I want clothes to cover me, and I am now too weak and old to walk far in such a deep snow; but if it must be so——'

I then turned to my wife and children, and directed them to get together what few things were left us, and to prepare immediately for leaving this place. I entreated them to be expeditious; and desired my son to assist his eldest sister, who, from a consciousness that she was the cause of our calamities, was fallen, and had lost anguish in insensibility. I encouraged my wife, who, pale and trembling, clasped our affrighted little ones in her arms, that clung to her bosom in silence, dreading to look round at the strangers. In the mean time, my youngest daughter prepared for our departure; and as she received several hints to use despatch, in about an hour we were ready to depart.

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CHAP. XXV.—No situation, however wretched it seems, but has some sort of comfort attending it.

We set forward from this peaceful neighbourhood, and walked on slowly: my eldest daughter being enfeebled

by a slow fever, which had begun for some days to undermine her constitution, one of the officers, who had a horse, kindly took her behind him; for even these men cannot entirely divest themselves of humanity. My son led one of the little ones by the hand, and my wife the other; while I leaned upon my youngest girl, whose tears fell, not for her own, but my distresses.

We were now got from my late dwelling about two miles, when we saw a crowd running and shouting behind us, consisting of about fifty of my poorest parishioners. These, with dreadful imprecations, soon seized upon the two officers of justice, and, swearing they would never see their minister go to a jail while they had a drop of blood to shed in his defence, were going to use them with great severity. The consequence might have been fatal, had I not immediately interposed, and with some difficulty rescued the officers from the hands of the enraged multitude. My children, who looked upon my delivery now as certain, appeared transported with joy, and were incapable of containing their raptures: but they were soon undeceived, upon hearing me address the poor deluded people, who came, as they imagined, to do me service.

‘What! my friends,’ cried I; ‘and is this the way you love me? Is this the manner you obey the instructions I have given you from the pulpit,—thus to fly in the face of justice, and bring down ruin on yourselves and me? Which is your ringleader? Show me the man that has thus seduced you: as sure as he lives, he shall feel my resentment. Alas! my dear deluded flock, return back to the duty you owe to God, to your country, and to me. I shall yet, perhaps, one day see you in greater felicity here, and contribute to make your lives more happy; but let it at least be my comfort, when I pen my fold for immortality, that not one here shall be wanting.’

They now seemed all repentance, and, melting into tears, came, one after the other, to bid me farewell. I shook each tenderly by the hand, and, leaving them my blessing, proceeded forward without meeting any farther

interruption. Some hours before night we reached the town, or rather village; for it consisted but of a few mean houses, having lost all its former opulence, and containing no marks of its ancient superiority but the jail.

Upon entering, we put up at an inn, where we had such refreshments as could most readily be procured, and I supped with my family with my usual cheerfulness. After seeing them properly accommodated for that night, I next attended the sheriff's officers to the prison, which had formerly been built for the purposes of war, and consisted of one large apartment, strongly grated, and paved with stone, common to both felons and debtors at certain hours in the four-and-twenty. Besides this, every prisoner had a separate cell, where he was locked in for the night.

I expected upon my entrance to find nothing but lamentations, and various sounds of misery; but it was very different. The prisoners seemed all employed in one common design, that of forgetting thought in merriment or clamour. I was apprised of the usual perquisite required upon these occasions; and immediately complied with the demand, though the little money I had was very near being all exhausted. This was immediately sent away for liquor, and the whole prison was soon filled with riot, laughter, and profaneness.

'How!' cried I to myself; 'shall men so very wicked be cheerful, and shall I be melancholy? I feel only the same confinement with them, and I think I have more reason to be happy.'

With such reflections I laboured to become cheerful; but cheerfulness was never yet produced by effort, which is itself painful. As I was sitting, therefore, in a corner of the jail, in a pensive posture, one of my fellow-prisoners came up, and, sitting by me, entered into conversation. It was my constant rule in life never to avoid the conversation of any man who seemed to desire it; for, if good, I might profit by his instructions; if bad, he might be assisted by mine. I found this to be a knowing man, of strong unlettered sense, but a thorough knowledge of

the world, as it is called, or, more properly speaking, of human nature on the wrong side. He asked me if I had taken care to provide myself with a bed, which was a circumstance I had never once attended to.

‘That’s unfortunate,’ cried he, ‘as you are allowed nothing but straw, and your apartment is very large and cold. However, you seem to be something of a gentleman; and as I have been one myself in my time, part of my bed-clothes are heartily at your service.’

I thanked him, professing my surprise at finding such humanity in a jail, in misfortunes; adding, to let him see that I was a scholar, that the sage ancient seemed to understand the value of company in affliction, when he said, *ton kosmon aire, ei dos ton etairon*; ‘and, in fact,’ continued I, ‘what is the world, if it affords only solitude?’

‘You talk of the world, sir,’ returned my fellow-prisoner: ‘the world is in its dotage; and yet the cosmogony, or creation of the world, has puzzled the philosophers of every age. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world! Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus, have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words: *Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to pan*, which implies——’ —‘I ask pardon, sir,’ cried I, ‘for interrupting so much learning; but I think I have heard all this before. Have I not had the pleasure of once seeing you at Welbridge fair; and is not your name Ephraim Jenkinson?’ At this demand he only sighed. ‘I suppose you must recollect,’ resumed I, ‘one Doctor Primrose, from whom you bought a horse.’

He now at once recollected me, for the gloominess of the place and the approaching night had prevented his distinguishing my features before. ‘Yes, sir,’ returned Mr. Jenkinson, ‘I remember you perfectly well: I bought a horse, but forgot to pay for him. Your neighbour Flamborough is the only prosecutor I am any way afraid of at the next assizes; for he intends to swear positively against me as a coiner. I am heartily sorry, sir, I ever deceived you, or indeed any man; for you

see,' continued he, pointing to his shackles, 'what my tricks have brought me to.'

'Well, sir,' replied I, 'your kindness in offering me assistance, when you could expect no return, shall be repaid with my endeavours to soften or totally suppress Mr. Flamborough's evidence, and I will send my son to him for that purpose the first opportunity; nor do I in the least doubt but he will comply with my request; and, as to my own evidence, you need be under no uneasiness about that.'

'Well, sir,' cried he, 'all the return I can make shall be yours. You shall have more than half my bed-clothes to-night, and I'll take care to stand your friend in the prison, where I think I have some influence.'

I thanked him, and could not avoid being surprised at the present youthful change in his aspect; for, at the time I had seen him before, he appeared at least sixty. 'Sir,' answered he, 'you are little acquainted with the world. I had at that time false hair, and have learned the art of counterfeiting every age from seventeen to seventy. Ah, sir! had I but bestowed half the pains in learning a trade, that I have in learning to be a scoundrel, I might have been a rich man at this day; but, rogue as I am, still I may be your friend, and that, perhaps, when you least expect it.'

We were now prevented from farther conversation by the arrival of the jailer's servants, who came to call over the prisoners' names, and lock up for the night: a fellow also with a bundle of straw for my bed attended, who led me along a dark narrow passage into a room paved like the common prison, and in one corner of this I spread my bed, and the clothes given me by my fellow-prisoner; which done, my conductor, who was civil enough, bade me a good night. After my usual meditations, and having praised my heavenly Corrector, I laid myself down, and slept with the utmost tranquillity till morning.

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CHAP. XXVI.—A reformation in the jail—to make laws complete, they should reward as well as punish.

The next morning early, I was awakened by my family, whom I found in tears at my bed-side. The gloomy appearance of every thing about us, it seems, had daunted them. I gently rebuked their sorrow, assuring them I had never slept with greater tranquillity; and, next, inquired after my eldest daughter, who was not among them: they informed me that yesterday's uneasiness and fatigue had increased her fever, and it was judged proper to leave her behind. My next care was to send my son to procure a room or two to lodge my family in, as near the prison as conveniently could be found. He obeyed, but could only find one apartment, which was hired at a small expense, for his mother and sisters; the jailer with humanity consenting to let him and his two little brothers be in the prison with me: a bed was therefore prepared for them in a corner of the room, which I thought answered very conveniently. I was willing, however, previously to know whether my little children chose to lie in a place which seemed to frighten them upon entrance.

'Well,' cried I, 'my good boys, how do you like your bed? I hope you are not afraid to lie in this room, dark as it appears?'

'No, papa,' says Dick, 'I am not afraid to lie any where, where you are.'

'And I,' says Bill, who was yet but four years old, 'love every place best that my papa is in.'

After this, I allotted to each of the family what they were to do. My daughter was particularly directed to watch her declining sister's health; my wife was to attend me; my little boys were to read to me; 'And as for you, my son,' continued I, 'it is by the labour of your hands we must all hope to be supported. Your wages, as a day-labourer, will be fully sufficient, with proper frugality, to maintain us all, and comfortably too. Thou art now sixteen years old, and hast strength, and it

was given thee, my son, for very useful purposes; for it must save from famine your helpless parents and family. Prepare then this evening to look out for work against to-morrow, and bring home every night what money you earn for our support.

Having thus instructed him, and settled the rest, I walked down to the common prison, where I could enjoy more air and room; but I was not long there, when the execrations, lewdness, and brutality, that invaded me on every side, drove me back to my apartments again: here I sat for some time pondering upon the strange infatuation of wretches, who, finding all mankind in open arms against them, were labouring to make themselves a future and tremendous enemy.

Their insensibility excited my highest compassion, and blotted my own uneasiness from my mind: it even appeared a duty incumbent upon me to attempt to reclaim them. I resolved, therefore, once more to return, and, in spite of their contempt, to give them my advice, and conquer them by perseverance. Going therefore among them again, I informed Mr. Jenkinson of my design; at which he laughed heartily, but communicated it to the rest. The proposal was received with the greatest good-humour, as it promised to afford a new fund of entertainment to persons, who had now no other resource for mirth but what could be derived from ridicule or debauchery.

I therefore read them a portion of the service with a loud unaffected voice, and found my audience perfectly merry upon the occasion: lewd whispers, groans of contrition burlesqued, winking and coughing, alternately excited laughter. However, I continued with my natural solemnity to read on, sensible that what I did might amend some, but could itself receive no contamination from any.

After reading, I entered upon my exhortation, which was rather calculated at first to amuse them than to reprove. I previously observed that no other motive but their welfare could induce me to this; that I was their fellow-prisoner, and now got nothing by preaching. I was sorry, I said, to hear them so very profane; because



they got nothing by it, and might lose a great deal : ' For, be assured, my friends,' cried I, (' for you are my friends, however the world may disclaim your friendship) though you swore twelve thousand oaths in a day, it would not put one penny in your purse. Then what signifies calling every moment upon the devil, and courting his friendship, since you find how scurvily he uses you? He has given you nothing here, you find, but a mouthful of oaths and an empty belly; and, by the best accounts I have of him, he will give you nothing that's good hereafter.

' If used ill in our dealing with one man, we naturally go elsewhere. Were it not worth your while, then, just to try how you may like the usage of another Master, who gives you fair promises, at least, to come to him? Surely, my friends, of all stupidity in the world, his must be the greatest, who, after robbing a house, runs to the thief-takers for protection : and yet, how are you more wise? You are all seeking comfort from one that has already betrayed you, applying to a more malicious being than any thief-taker of them all ; for they only decoy, and then hang you ; but he decoys and hangs, and, what is worst of all, will not let you loose after the hangman has done.'

When I had concluded, I received the compliments of my audience, some of whom came and shook me by the hand, swearing that I was a very honest fellow, and that they desired my farther acquaintance : I therefore promised to repeat my lecture next day, and actually conceived some hope of making a reformation here ; for it had ever been my opinion, that no man was past the hour of amendment, every heart lying open to the shafts of reproof, if the archer could but take a proper aim. When I had thus satisfied my mind, I went back to my apartment, where my wife prepared a frugal meal, while Mr. Jenkinson begged leave to add his dinner to ours, and partake of the pleasure, as he was kind enough to express it, of my conversation. He had not yet seen my family ; for as they came to my apartment by a door in the narrow passage already described, by this means they avoided

the common prison : Jenkinson, at the first interview, therefore, seemed not a little struck with the beauty of my youngest daughter, which her pensive air contributed to heighten ; and my little ones did not pass unnoticed.

‘ Alas ! doctor,’ cried he, ‘ these children are too handsome and too good for such a place as this.’

‘ Why, Mr. Jenkinson,’ replied I, ‘ thank Heaven, my children are pretty tolerable in morals ; and if they be good, it matters little for the rest.’

‘ I fancy, sir,’ returned my fellow-prisoner, ‘ that it must give you a great comfort to have this little family about you.’

‘ A comfort, Mr. Jenkinson !’ replied I : ‘ yes, it is indeed a comfort, and I would not be without them for all the world ; for they can make a dungeon seem a palace. There is but one way in this life of wounding my happiness, and that is by injuring them.’

‘ I am afraid then, sir,’ cried he, ‘ that I am in some measure culpable ; for I think I see here (looking at my son Moses) one that I have injured, and by whom I wish to be forgiven.’

My son immediately recollected his voice and features, though he had before seen him in disguise ; and, taking him by the hand, with a smile, forgave him. ‘ Yet,’ continued he, ‘ I can’t help wondering at what you could see in my face, to think me a proper mark for deception.’

‘ My dear sir,’ returned the other, ‘ it was not your face, but your white stockings, and the black ribbon on your hair, that allured me. But, no disparagement to your parts, I have deceived wiser men than you in my time ; and yet, with all my tricks, the blockheads have been too many for me at last.’

‘ I suppose,’ cried my son, ‘ that the narrative of such a life as yours must be extremely instructive and amusing.’

‘ Not much of either,’ returned Mr. Jenkinson : ‘ those relations, which describe the tricks and vices only of mankind, by increasing our suspicion in life, retard our success. The traveller, that distrusts every person he meets,

and turns back upon the appearance of every man that looks like a robber, seldom arrives in time at his journey's end. I indeed I think, from my own experience, that the knowing one is the silliest fellow under the sun. I was thought cunning from my very childhood; when but seven years old, the ladies would say that I was a perfect little man; at fourteen I knew the world, cocked my hat, and loved the ladies; at twenty, though I was perfectly honest, yet every one thought me so cunning, that no one would trust me. Thus I was at last obliged to turn sharper in my own defence, and have lived ever since, my head throbbing with schemes to deceive, and my heart palpitating with fears of detection. I used often to laugh at your honest, simple neighbour Flam-borough, and one way or another generally cheated him once a year: yet still the honest man went forward without suspicion, and grew rich; while I still continued tricky and cunning, and was poor, without the consolation of being honest. However,' continued he, 'let me know your case, and what has brought you here: perhaps, though I have not skill to avoid a jail myself, I may extricate my friends.'

In compliance with his curiosity, I informed him of the whole train of accidents and follies that had plunged me into my present troubles, and my utter inability to get free.

After hearing my story, and pausing some minutes, he slapped his forehead, as if he had hit upon something material, and took his leave, saying, he would try what could be done.

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CHAP. XXVII.—The same subject continued.

The next morning I communicated to my wife and children the schemes I had planned of reforming the prisoners, which they received with universal disapprobation, alleging the impossibility and impropriety of it; adding, that my endeavours would no way contribute to their amendment, but might probably disgrace my calling.

'Excuse me,' returned I; 'these people, however fallen, are still men; and that is a very good title to my affections. Good counsel rejected, returns to enrich the giver's bosom; and though the instruction I communicate may not mend them, yet it will assuredly mend myself. If these wretches, my children, were princes, there would be thousands ready to offer their ministry; but, in my opinion, the heart that is buried in a dungeon is as precious as that seated upon a throne. Yes, my treasures, if I can mend them, I will: perhaps they will not all despise me; perhaps I may catch up even one from the gulf, and that will be great gain; for is there upon earth a gem so precious as the human soul?'

Thus saying, I left them, and descended to the common prison, where I found the prisoners very merry, expecting my arrival; and each prepared with some jail-trick to play upon the doctor. Thus, as I was going to begin, one turned my wig awry, as if by accident, and then asked my pardon: a second, who stood at some distance, had a knack of spitting through his teeth, which fell in showers upon my book: a third would cry Amen! in such an affected tone as gave the rest great delight: a fourth had slyly picked my pocket of my spectacles: but there was one, whose trick gave more universal pleasure than all the rest; for, observing the manner in which I had disposed my books on the table before me, he very dexterously displaced one of them, and put an obscene jest-book of his own in the place. However, I took no notice of all this mischievous group of little beings could do, but went on, perfectly sensible that what was ridiculous in my attempt would excite mirth only the first or second time, while what was serious would be permanent. My design succeeded; and in less than six days, some were penitent, and all attentive.

It was now that I applauded my perseverance and address, at thus giving sensibility to wretches divested of every moral feeling, and now began to think of doing them temporal services also, by rendering their situation somewhat more comfortable. Their time had hitherto been divided between famine and excess, tumultuous riot

and bitter repining: their only employment was quarrelling among each other, playing at cribbage, and cutting tobacco-stoppers. From this last mode of idle industry I took the hint of setting such as chose to work, at cutting pegs for tobacconists and shoemakers, the proper wood being bought by a general subscription, and, when manufactured, sold by my appointment; so that each earned something every day;—a trifle indeed, but sufficient to maintain him.

I did not stop here, but instituted fines for the punishment of immorality, and rewards for peculiar industry. Thus in less than a fortnight I had formed them into something social and humane, and had the pleasure of regarding myself as a legislator, who had brought men from their native ferocity into friendship and obedience.

And it were highly to be wished, that legislative power would thus direct the law rather to reformation than severity; that it would soon be convinced that the work of eradicating crimes is not by making punishments familiar, but formidable. Then, instead of our present prisons, which find or make men guilty; which enclose wretches for the commission of one crime, and return them, if returned alive, fitted for the perpetration of thousands;—it were to be wished we had, as in other parts of Europe, places of penitence and solitude, where the accused might be attended by such as could give them repentance if guilty, or new motives to virtue if innocent. And this, but not the increasing punishments, is the way to mend a state: nor can I avoid even questioning the validity of that right which social combinations have assumed, of capitally punishing offences of a slight nature. In cases of murder their right is obvious; as it is the duty of us all, from the law of self-defence, to cut off that man, who has shown a disregard for the life of another: against such all nature rises in arms; but it is not so against him who steals my property. Natural law gives me no right to take away his life, as by that the horse he steals is as much his property as mine. If, then, I have any right, it must be from a compact made between us, that he, who deprives the other of his horse, shall die. But this is a

false compact; because no man has a right to barter his life, no more than take it away; as it is not his own. And, besides, the compact is inadequate, and would be set aside even in a court of modern equity, as there is a great penalty for a trifling inconvenience; since it is far better that two men should live than one man should ride. But a compact that is false between two men is equally so between a hundred and a hundred thousand; for as ten millions of circles can never make a square, so the united voice of myriads cannot lend the smallest foundation to falsehood. It is thus that reason speaks, and untutored nature says the same thing. Savages, that are directed by natural law alone, are very tender of the lives of each other; they seldom shed blood but to retaliate former cruelty.

*death  
sent*

Our Saxon ancestors, fierce as they were in war, had but few executions in times of peace; and in all commencing governments, that have the print of nature still strong upon them, scarce any crime is held capital.

It is among the citizens of a refined community, that penal laws, which are in the hands of the rich, are laid upon the poor. Government, while it grows older, seems to acquire the moroseness of age; and as if our property were become dearer in proportion as it increased; as if the more enormous our wealth, the more extensive our fears;—all our possessions are paled up with new edicts every day, and hung round with gibbets to scare every invader.

I cannot tell, whether it is from the number of our penal laws, or the licentiousness of our people, that this country should show more convicts in a year than half the dominions of Europe united. Perhaps it is owing to both; for they mutually produce each other. When by indiscriminate penal laws a nation beholds the same punishment affixed to dissimilar degrees of guilt, from perceiving no distinction in the penalty, the people are led to lose all sense of distinction in the crime, and this distinction is the bulwark of all morality: thus the multitude of laws produces new vices, and new vices call for fresh restraints.

It were to be wished, then, that power, instead of contriving new laws to punish vice ; instead of drawing hard the cords of society till a convulsion come to burst them ; instead of cutting away wretches as useless, before we have tried their utility ; instead of converting correction into vengeance ;—it were to be wished, that we tried the restrictive arts of government, and made laws the protector, but not the tyrant, of the people. We should then find, that creatures, whose souls are held as dross, only wanted the hand of a refiner ; we should then find, that wretches, now stuck up for long tortures, lest luxury should feel a momentary pang, might, if properly treated, serve to sinew the state in times of danger ; that, as their faces are like ours, their hearts are so too ; that few minds are so base, as that perseverance cannot amend ; that a man may see his last crime without dying for it ; and that very little blood will serve to cement our security.

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CHAP. XXVIII.—Happiness and misery rather the result of prudence than of virtue in this life ; temporal evils or felicities being regarded by Heaven as things merely in themselves trifling, and unworthy its care in the distribution.

I had now been confined more than a fortnight, but had not since my arrival been visited by my dear Olivia ; and I greatly longed to see her. Having communicated my wishes to my wife, the next morning the poor girl entered my apartment, leaning on her sister's arm. The change which I saw in her countenance struck me. The numberless graces that once resided there were now fled, and the hand of death seemed to have moulded every feature to alarm me : her temples were sunk, her forehead was tense, and a fatal paleness sat upon her cheek.

‘ I am glad to see thee, my dear,’ cried I : ‘ but why this dejection, Livy ? I hope, my love, you have too great a regard for me, to permit disappointment thus to undermine a life which I prize as my own. Be cheerful, my child, and we may yet see happier days.’

‘ You have ever, sir,’ replied she, ‘ been kind to me ;

and it adds to my pain, that I shall never have an opportunity of sharing the happiness you promise. Happiness, I fear, is no longer reserved for me here, and I long to be rid of a place where I have only found distress. Indeed, sir, I wish you would make a proper submission to Mr. Thornhill: it may, in some measure, induce him to pity you, and it will give me relief in dying.'

'Never, child,' replied I, 'never will I be brought to acknowledge my daughter a prostitute; for though the world may look upon your offence with scorn, let it be mine to regard it as a mark of credulity, not of guilt. My dear, I am no way miserable in this place, however dismal it may seem; and be assured, that while you continue to bless me by living, he shall never have my consent to make you more wretched by marrying another.'

After the departure of my daughter, my fellow-prisoner, who was by at this interview, sensibly enough expostulated upon my obstinacy, in refusing a submission which promised to give me freedom. He observed, that the rest of my family were not to be sacrificed to the peace of one child alone, and she the only one who had offended me. 'Besides,' added he, 'I don't know if it be just thus to obstruct the union of man and wife, which you do at present, by refusing to consent to a match, which you cannot hinder, but may render unhappy.'

'Sir,' replied I, 'you are unacquainted with the man that oppresses us. I am very sensible that no submission I can make could procure me liberty even for an hour. I am told, that, even in this very room, a debtor of his, no later than last year, died for want. But though my submission and approbation could transfer me from hence to the most beautiful apartment he is possessed of, yet I would grant neither; as something whispers me, that it would be giving a sanction to adultery. While my daughter lives, no other marriage of his shall ever be legal in my eye. Were she removed, indeed, I should be the basest of men, from any resentment of my own, to attempt putting asunder those who wish for a union. No, villain as he is, I should even wish him married, to prevent the consequences of his future debaucheries. But



now, should I not be the most cruel of all fathers, to sign an instrument, which must send my child to the grave, merely to avoid a prison myself; and thus, to escape one pang, break my child's heart with a thousand?" He acquiesced in the justice of this answer, but could not avoid observing, that he feared my daughter's life was already too much wasted to keep me long a prisoner. 'However,' continued he, 'though you refuse to submit to the nephew, I hope you have no objection to laying your case before the uncle, who has the first character in the kingdom for every thing that is just and good. I would advise you to send him a letter by the post, intimating all his nephew's ill usage; and, my life for it, that, in three days, you shall have an answer.' I thanked him for the hint, and instantly set about complying; but I wanted paper, and unluckily all our money had been laid out that morning in provisions; however, he supplied me.

For the three ensuing days I was in a state of anxiety, to know what reception my letter might meet with; but in the mean time was frequently solicited by my wife to submit to any conditions rather than remain here, and every hour received repeated accounts of the decline of my daughter's health. The third day and the fourth arrived, but I received no answer to my letter: the complaints of a stranger against a favourite nephew were no way likely to succeed; so that these hopes soon vanished, like all my former. My mind, however, still supported itself, though confinement and bad air began to make a little alteration in my health, and my arm, that had suffered in the fire, grew worse. My children, however, sat by me, and, while I was stretched on my straw, read to me by turns, or listened and wept at my instructions: but my daughter's health declining faster than mine, every message from her contributed to increase my apprehensions and pain. The fifth morning after I had written the letter which was sent Sir William Thornhill, I was alarmed with an account that she was speechless. Now it was that confinement was truly painful to me; my soul was bursting from its prison, to be near the pillow of my child, to comfort, to strengthen her, to receive last wishes, and teach her soul the way to heaven.

Another account came, she was expiring, and yet I was debarred the small comfort of weeping by her. My fellow-prisoner, some time after, came with the last account: he bade me be patient—she was dead! The next morning he returned, and found me with my two little ones, *Olivia* now my only companions, who were using all their innocent efforts to comfort me. They entreated to read to me, and bade me not cry, for I was now too old to weep. ‘And is not my sister an angel now, papa?’ cried the eldest; ‘and why then are you sorry for her? I wish I were an angel, out of this frightful place, if my papa were with me.’—‘Yes,’ added my youngest darling, ‘heaven, where my sister is, is a finer place than this; and there are none but good people there, and the people here are very bad.’

Mr. Jenkinson interrupted their harmless prattle, by observing, that, now my daughter was no more, I should seriously think of the rest of my family, and attempt to save my own life, which was every day declining for want of necessaries and wholesome air. He added, that it was now incumbent on me to sacrifice any pride or resentment of my own to the welfare of those who depended on me for support; and that I was now, both by reason and justice, obliged to try to reconcile my landlord.

‘Heaven be praised!’ replied I; ‘there is no pride left me now. I should detest my own heart, if I saw either pride or resentment lurking there. On the contrary, as my oppressor has been once my parishioner, I hope one day to present him up an unpolluted soul at the eternal tribunal. No, sir, I have no resentment now; and though he has taken from me what I held dearer than all his treasures, though he has wrung my heart, (for I am sick almost to fainting, very sick) my fellow-prisoner, yet that shall never inspire me with vengeance. I am now willing to approve his marriage; and if this submission can do him any pleasure, let him know, that if I have done him any injury, I am sorry for it.’ Mr. Jenkinson took pen and ink, and wrote down my submission nearly as I have expressed it, to which I signed my name. My son was employed to carry the letter to Mr. Thornhill, who was

then at his seat in the country. He went, and in about six hours returned with a verbal answer. He had some difficulty, he said, to get a sight of his landlord, as the servants were insolent and suspicious; but he accidentally saw him as he was going out upon business, preparing for his marriage, which was to be in three days. He continued to inform us, that he stepped up in the humblest manner, and delivered the letter, which, when Mr. Thornhill had read, he said that all submission was now too late and unnecessary; that he had heard of our application to his uncle, which met with the contempt it deserved; and as for the rest, that all future applications should be directed to his attorney, not to him. He observed, however, that as he had a very good opinion of the discretion of the two young ladies, they might have been the most agreeable intercessors.

'Well, sir,' said I to my fellow-prisoner, 'you now discover the temper of the man who oppresses me. He can at once be facetious and cruel; but let him use me as he will, I shall soon be free, in spite of all his bolts to restrain me. I am now drawing towards an abode that looks brighter as I approach it: this expectation cheers my afflictions; and though I leave a helpless family of orphans behind me, yet they will not be utterly forsaken: some friend, perhaps, will be found to assist them for the sake of their poor father, and some may charitably relieve them for the sake of their Heavenly Father.'

Just as I spoke, my wife, whom I had not seen that day before, appeared with looks of terror, and making efforts, but unable, to speak. 'Why, my love,' cried I, 'why will you thus increase my afflictions by your own? What, though no submission can turn our severe master; though he has doomed me to die in this place of wretchedness, and though we have lost a darling child? yet still you will find comfort in your other children, when I shall be no more.'—'We have indeed lost,' returned she, 'a darling child!—My Sophia, my dearest, is gone—snatched from us, carried off by ruffians!'

'How, madam!' cried my fellow-prisoner: 'Miss Sophia carried off by villains? Sure, it cannot be!'

She could only answer with a fixed look, and a flood of tears : but one of the prisoners' wives, who was present, and came in with her, gave us a more distinct account. She informed us, that as my wife, my daughter, and herself, were taking a walk together, on the great road, a little way out of the village, a post-chaise and pair drove up to them, and instantly stopped ; upon which a well-dressed man, but not Mr. Thornhill, stepping out, clasped my daughter round the waist, and, forcing her in, bade the postillion drive on, so that they were out of sight in a moment. *Supposed taken*

' Now,' cried I, ' the sum of my miseries is made up, nor is it in the power of any thing on earth to give me another pang. What ! not one left ? not leave me one ? the monster ! The child that was next my heart ! she had the beauty of an angel, and almost the wisdom of an angel. But support that woman, nor let her fall. Not to leave me one !'—' Alas, my husband !' said my wife, ' you seem to want comfort even more than I. Our distresses are great ; but I could bear this, and more, if I saw you but easy. They may take away my children, and all the world, if they leave me but you.'

My son, who was present, endeavoured to moderate her grief ; he bade us take comfort, for he hoped that we might still have reason to be thankful. ' My child,' cried I, ' look round the world, and see if there be any happiness left me now. Is not every ray of comfort shut out ? while all our bright prospects only lie beyond the grave.'—' My dear father,' returned he, ' I hope there is still something that will give you an interval of satisfaction : for I have a letter from my brother George.'—' What of him, my child ?' interrupted I : ' does he know our misery ? I hope my boy is exempt from any part of what the wretched family suffers.'—' Yes, sir,' returned he, ' he is perfectly gay, cheerful, and happy. His letter brings nothing but good news : he is the favourite of his colonel, who promises to procure him the very next lieutenantancy that becomes vacant.'

' But are you sure of all this ?' cried my wife ; ' are you sure that nothing ill has befallen my boy ?'—' Nothing,

indeed, madam,' returned my son: 'you shall see the letter, which will give you the highest pleasure; and if any thing can procure you comfort, I am sure that will.'—'But are you sure,' still repeated she, 'that the letter is from himself, and that he is really so happy?'—'Yes, madam,' replied he, 'it is certainly his, and he will one day be the credit and the support of our family.'—'Then, I thank Providence,' cried she, 'that my last letter to him has miscarried. Yes, my dear,' continued she, turning to me, 'I will now confess, that though the hand of Heaven is sore upon us in other instances, it has been favourable here. By the last letter I wrote my son, which was in the bitterness of anger, I desired him, upon his mother's blessing, and if he had the heart of a man, to see justice done his father and sister, and avenge our cause: but, thanks be to Him who directs all things, it has miscarried, and I am at rest.'—'Woman,' cried I, 'thou hast done very ill, and at another time my reproaches might have been more severe. O! what a tremendous gulf hast thou escaped, that would have buried both thee and him in endless ruin! Providence, indeed, has here been kinder to us than we to ourselves: it has reserved that son to be the father and protector of my children, when I shall be away. How unjustly did I complain of being stripped of every comfort, when still I hear that he is happy, and insensible of our afflictions; still kept in reserve to support his widowed mother, and to protect his brothers and sisters!—But what sisters has he left? he has no sisters now: they are all gone, robbed from me, and I am undone!'—'Father,' interrupted my son, 'I beg you will give me leave to read this letter: I know it will please you.' Upon which, with my permission, he read as follows:—

'Honoured sir,

'I have called off my imagination a few moments from the pleasures that surround me, to fix it upon objects that are still more pleasing, the dear little fire-side at home. My fancy draws that harmless group as listening to every line of this with great composure. I view those faces with delight, which never felt the deforming hand of ambition or distress. But, whatever your happiness may be at home, I am sure it will be some addition to it, to hear that

I am perfectly pleased with my situation, and every way happy here.

Our regiment is countermanded, and is not to leave the kingdom: the colonel, who professes himself my friend, takes me with him to all companies where he is acquainted; and, after my first visit, I generally find myself received with increased respect upon repeating it. I danced last night with lady G—, and, could I forget you know whom, I might be, perhaps, successful: but it is my fate still to remember others, while I am myself forgotten by most of my absent friends; and in this number, I fear, sir, that I must consider you; for I have long expected the pleasure of a letter from home to no purpose. Olivia and Sophia, too, promised to write, but seem to have forgotten me. Tell them that they are two arrant little baggages; and that I am, this moment, in a most violent passion with them: yet still, I know not how, though I want to bluster a little, my heart is respondent only to softer emotions. Then tell them, sir, that, after all, I love them affectionately; and be assured of my ever remaining your dutiful son.

‘In all our miseries,’ cried I, ‘what thanks have we not to return, that one at least of our family is exempted from what we suffer! Heaven be his guard, and keep my boy thus happy to be the support of his widowed mother, and the father of these two babes, which is all the patrimony I can now bequeath him! May he keep their innocence from the temptations of want, and be their conductor in the paths of honour!’ I had scarcely said these words, when a noise like that of a tumult seemed to proceed from the prison below: it died away soon after, and a clanking of fetters was heard along the passage that led to my apartment. The keeper of the prison entered, holding a man all bloody, wounded, and fettered with the heaviest irons. I looked with compassion upon the wretch as he approached me, but with horror when I found it was my own son! ‘My George! my George! and do I behold thee thus? wounded! fettered! Is this thy happiness? Is this the manner you return to me? O, that this sight would break my heart at once, and let me die!’

‘Where, sir, is your fortitude?’ returned my son, with an intrepid voice: ‘I must suffer; my life is forfeited, and let them take it.’

I tried to restrain my passion for a few minutes in silence, but I thought I should have died with the effort. ‘O, my boy, my heart weeps to behold thee thus, and

I cannot, cannot help it! In the moment I thought thee blest, and prayed for thy safety, to behold thee thus again, chained, wounded? And yet, the death of the youthful is happy: but I am old, a very old man, and have lived to see this day; to see my children all untimely falling about me, while I continue a wretched survivor in the midst of ruin! May all the curses that ever sunk a soul fall heavy upon the murderer of my children! May he live, like me, to see——'

'Hold, sir,' replied my son, 'or I shall blush for thee. How, sir! forgetful of your age, your holy calling, thus to arrogate the justice of Heaven, and fling those curses upward, that must soon descend to crush thy own gray head with destruction! No, sir, let it be your care now to fit me for that vile death I must shortly suffer; to arm me with hope and resolution; to give me courage to drink of that bitterness, which must shortly be my portion.'

'My child, you must not die! I am sure no offence of thine can deserve so vile a punishment. My George could never be guilty of any crime, to make his ancestors ashamed of him.'

'Mine, sir,' returned my son, 'is, I fear, an unpardonable one. When I received my mother's letter from home, I immediately came down, determined to punish the betrayer of our honour, and sent him an order to meet me, which he answered, not in person, but by despatching four of his domestics to seize me. I wounded one who first assaulted me, and I fear desperately; but the rest made me their prisoner. The coward is determined to put the law in execution against me: the proofs are undeniable: I have sent a challenge; and as I am the first aggressor upon the statute, I see no hopes of pardon. But you have often charmed me with your lessons of fortitude; let me now, sir, find them in your example.'

'And, my son, you shall find them. I am now raised above this world, and all the pleasures it can produce. From this moment I break from my heart all the ties that held it down to earth, and will prepare to fit us both for eternity. Yes, my son, I will point out the way, and my soul shall guide yours in the ascent, for we will take

our flight together. I now see and am convinced you can expect no pardon here, and I can only exhort you to seek it at that greatest tribunal where we shall both shortly answer. But let us not be niggardly in our exhortations, but let all our fellow-prisoners have a share. Good jailer, let them be permitted to stand here, while I attempt to improve them.' Thus saying, I made an effort to rise from the straw, but wanted strength, and was able only to recline against the wall. The prisoners assembled according to my directions, for they loved to hear my counsel; my son and his mother supported me on either side; I looked and saw that none were wanting, and then addressed them with the following exhortation.

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CHAP. XXIX.—The equal dealings of Providence demonstrated with regard to the happy and the miserable here below: that, from the nature of pleasure and pain, the wretched must be repaid the balance of their sufferings in the life hereafter.

'My friends, my children, and fellow-sufferers, when I reflect on the distribution of good and evil here below, I find that much has been given man to enjoy, yet still more to suffer. Though we should examine the whole world, we shall not find one man so happy as to have nothing left to wish for; but we daily see thousands who by suicide show us they have nothing left to hope. In this life, then, it appears that we cannot be entirely blessed; but yet we may be completely miserable.

'Why man should thus feel pain; why our wretchedness should be requisite in the formation of universal felicity; why, when all other systems are made perfect by the perfection of their subordinate parts, the great system should require for its perfection, parts, that are not only subordinate to others, but imperfect in themselves;—these are questions, that never can be explained, and might be useless if known. On this subject Providence has thought fit to elude our curiosity, satisfied with granting us motives to consolation.

'In this situation, man has called in the friendly as-



sistance of philosophy ; and Heaven, seeing the incapacity of that to console him, has given him the aid of religion. The consolations of philosophy are very amusing, but often fallacious : it tells us, that life is filled with comforts, if we will but enjoy them ; and, on the other hand, that though we unavoidably have miseries here, life is short, and they will soon be over. Thus do these consolations destroy each other : for if life is a place of comfort, its shortness must be misery ; and if it be long, our griefs are protracted. Thus philosophy is weak ; but religion comforts in a higher strain. Man is here, it tells us, fitting up his mind, and preparing it for another abode. When the good man leaves the body, and is all a glorious mind, he will find he has been making himself a heaven of happiness here ; while the wretch that has been maimed and contaminated by his vices, shrinks from his body with terror, and finds that he has anticipated the vengeance of Heaven. To religion, then, we must hold, in every circumstance of life, for our truest comfort : for if already we are happy, it is a pleasure to think that we can make that happiness unending ; and if we are miserable, it is very consoling to think that there is a place of rest. Thus, to the fortunate, religion holds out a continuance of bliss ; to the wretched, a change from pain.

‘ But though religion is very kind to all men, it has promised peculiar rewards to the unhappy : the sick, the naked, the houseless, the heavy-laden, and the prisoner, have ever most frequent promises in our sacred law. The Author of our religion every where professes himself the wretch’s friend ; and, unlike the false ones of this world, bestows all his caresses upon the forlorn. The unthinking have censured this as partiality, as a preference without merit to deserve it : but they never reflect, that it is not in the power even of Heaven itself to make the offer of unceasing felicity as great a gift to the happy as to the miserable. To the first, eternity is but a single blessing ; since, at most, it but increases what they already possess : to the latter, it is a double advantage ; for it diminishes their pain here, and rewards them with heavenly bliss hereafter.

‘But Providence is in another respect kinder to the poor than to the rich; for, as it thus makes the life after death more desirable, so it smoothes the passage there. The wretched have had a long familiarity with every face of terror. The man of sorrow lays himself quietly down, with no possessions to regret, and but few ties to stop his departure; he feels only nature’s pang in the final separation, and this is no way greater than he has often fainted under before; for, after a certain degree of pain, every new breach that death opens in the constitution, nature kindly covers with insensibility.

‘Thus Providence has given to the wretched two advantages over the happy in this life—greater felicity in dying, and in heaven all that superiority of pleasure which arises from contrasted enjoyment. And this superiority, my friends, is no small advantage, and seems to be one of the pleasures of the poor man in the parable; for though he was already in heaven, and felt all the raptures it could give; yet it was mentioned, as an addition to his happiness, that he had once been wretched, and now was comforted; that he had known what it was to be miserable, and now felt what it was to be happy.

‘Thus, my friends, you see religion does what philosophy could never do: it shows the equal dealings of Heaven to the happy and the unhappy, and levels all human enjoyments to nearly the same standard: it gives to both rich and poor the same happiness hereafter, and equal hopes to aspire after it; but if the rich have the advantage of enjoying pleasure here, the poor have the endless satisfaction of knowing what it was once to be miserable, when crowned with endless felicity hereafter; and even though this should be called a small advantage, yet, being an eternal one, it must make up, by duration, what the temporal happiness of the great may have exceeded by intensesness.

‘These are, therefore, the consolations which the wretched have peculiar to themselves, and in which they are above the rest of mankind; in other respects they are below them. They, who would know the miseries of the poor, must see life, and endure it. To declaim on the

temporal advantages they enjoy, is only repeating what none either believe or practise. The men who have the necessities of living, are not poor; and they who want them, must be miserable. Yes, my friends, we must be miserable. No vain efforts of a refined imagination can soothe the wants of nature, can give elastic sweetness to the dark vapour of a dungeon, or ease the throbbings of a broken heart. Let the philosopher from his couch of softness tell us we can resist all these. Alas! the effort by which we resist them is still the greatest pain. Death is slight, and any man may sustain it; but torments are dreadful, and these no man can endure.

‘To us then, my friends, the promises of happiness in heaven should be peculiarly dear; for if our reward be in this life alone, we are, indeed, of all men the most miserable. When I look round these gloomy walls, made to terrify, as well as to confine us; this light, that only serves to show the horrors of the place; those shackles, that tyranny has imposed, or crime made necessary; when I survey these emaciated looks, and hear those groans—O, my friends, what a glorious exchange would heaven be for these! To fly through regions unconfined as air; to bask in the sunshine of eternal bliss; to carol over endless hymns of praise; to have no master to threaten or insult us, but the form of goodness himself for ever in our eyes;—when I think of these things, death becomes the messenger of very glad tidings; when I think of these things, his sharpest arrow becomes the staff of my support; when I think of these things, what is there in life worth having? when I think of these things, what is there that should not be spurned away? Kings in their palaces should groan for such advantages, but we, humbled as we are, should yearn for them.

‘And shall these things be ours? Ours they will certainly be, if we but try for them; and, what is a comfort, we are shut out from many temptations that would retard our pursuit. Only let us try for them, and they will certainly be ours; and, what is still a comfort, shortly too; for if we look back on past life, it appears but a very span; and whatever we may think of the rest of life,

it will yet be found of less duration : as we grow older, the days seem to grow shorter, and our intimacy with time ever lessens the perception of his stay. Then let us take comfort now, for we shall soon be at our journey's end ; we shall soon lay down the heavy burden laid by Heaven upon us ; and though death, the only friend of the wretched, for a little while mocks the weary traveller with the view, and, like the horizon, still flies before him ; yet the time will certainly and shortly come, when we shall cease from our toil ; when the luxuriant great ones of the world shall no more tread us to the earth ; when we shall think with pleasure of our sufferings below ; when we shall be surrounded with all our friends, or such as deserved our friendship ; when our bliss shall be unutterable, and still, to crown all, unending.'

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CHAP. XXX.—Happier prospects begin to appear. Let us be inflexible, and fortune will at last change in our favour.

When I had thus finished, and my audience was retired, the jailer, who was one of the most humane of his profession, hoped I would not be displeased, as what he did was but his duty ; observing, he must remove my son into a stronger cell, but he should be permitted to visit me every morning. I thanked him for his clemency, and, grasping my boy's hand, bade him farewell, and be mindful of the great duty that was before him.

I again therefore laid me down, and one of my little ones sat by my bed-side reading, when Mr. Jenkinson, entering, informed me that there was news of my daughter ; for that she was seen by a person about two hours before in a strange gentleman's company, and that they had stopped at a neighbouring village for refreshment, and seemed as if returning to town. He had scarce delivered this news, when the jailer came, with looks of haste and pleasure, to inform me that my daughter was found. Moses came running in a moment after, crying out that his sister Sophy was below, and coming up with our old friend Mr. Burchell.

Just as he delivered this news, my dearest girl entered, and, with looks almost wild with pleasure, ran to kiss me in a transport of affection. Her mother's tears and silence also showed her pleasure.

'Here, papa,' cried the charming girl, 'here is the brave man to whom I owe my delivery; to this gentleman's intrepidity I am indebted for my happiness and safety.' A kiss from Mr. Burchell, whose pleasure seemed even greater than hers, interrupted what she was going to add.

'Ah, Mr. Burchell!' cried I, 'this is but a wretched habitation you find us in; and we are now very different from what you last saw us. You were ever our friend: we have long discovered our errors with regard to you, and repented of our ingratitude. After the vile usage you then received at my hands, I am almost ashamed to behold your face; yet I hope you'll forgive me, as I was deceived by a base, ungenerous wretch, who, under the mask of friendship, has undone me.'

'It is impossible,' replied Mr. Burchell, 'that I should forgive you, as you never deserved my resentment. I partly saw your delusion then; and as it was out of my power to restrain, I could only pity it.'

'It was ever my conjecture,' cried I, 'that your mind was noble; but now I find it so. But tell me, my dear child, how hast thou been relieved, or who the ruffians were that carried thee away?'

'Indeed, sir,' replied she, 'as to the villain that carried me off, I am yet ignorant; for as my mamma and I were walking out, he came behind us, and, almost before I could call for help, forced me into the post-chaise, and in an instant the horses drove away. I met several on the road, to whom I cried out for assistance; but they disregarded my entreaties. In the mean time, the ruffian himself used every art to hinder me from crying out: he flattered and threatened me by turns, and swore, that if I continued but silent, he intended no harm. In the mean time I had broken the canvas that he had drawn up, and whom should I perceive at some distance, but your old friend Mr. Burchell, walking along with his usual swift-

ness, with the great stick, for which we used so much to ridicule him! As soon as we came within hearing, I called out to him by name, and entreated his help. I repeated my exclamations several times; upon which, with a very loud voice, he bade the postillion stop: but the boy took no notice, but drove on with still greater speed. I now thought he could never overtake us, when; in less than a minute, I saw Mr. Burchell come running up by the side of the horses, and with one blow knock the postillion to the ground. The horses, when he was fallen, soon stopped of themselves; and the ruffian, stepping out, with oaths and menaces, drew his sword, and ordered him at his peril to retire; but Mr. Burchell, running up, shivered his sword to pieces, and then pursued him for near a quarter of a mile; but he made his escape. I was at this time come out myself, willing to assist my deliverer; but he soon returned to me in triumph. The postillion, who was recovered, was going to make his escape too; but Mr. Burchell ordered him at his peril to mount again, and drive back to town: finding it impossible to resist, he reluctantly complied, though the wound he had received seemed, to me at least, to be dangerous. He continued to complain of the pain as we drove along, so that he at last excited Mr. Burchell's compassion; who, at my request, exchanged him for another at an inn where we called on our return.'

'Welcome, then,' cried I, 'my child; and thou, her gallant deliverer, a thousand welcomes! Though our cheer is but wretched, yet our hearts are ready to receive you. And now, Mr. Burchell, as you have delivered my girl, if you think her a recompense, she is yours: if you can stoop to an alliance with a family so poor as mine, take her; obtain her consent, as I know you have her heart, and you have mine: and let me tell you, sir, that I give you no small treasure: she has been celebrated for beauty, it is true; but that is not my meaning: I give you a treasure in her mind.'

'But I suppose, sir,' cried Mr. Burchell, 'that you are apprised of my circumstances, and of my incapacity to support her as she deserves?'

‘If your present objection,’ replied I, ‘be meant as an evasion of my offer, I desist: but I know no man so worthy to deserve her as you; and if I could give her thousands, and thousands sought her from me, yet my honest, brave Burchell should be my dearest choice.’

To all this, his silence alone seemed to give a mortifying refusal; and without the least reply to my offer, he demanded if we could not be furnished with refreshments from the next inn; to which, being answered in the affirmative, he ordered them to send in the best dinner that could be provided upon such short notice. He bespoke also a dozen of their best wine, and some cordials for me; adding, with a smile, that he would stretch a little for once; and, though in a prison, asserted he was never more disposed to be merry. The waiter soon made his appearance, with preparations for dinner: a table was lent us by the jailer, who seemed remarkably assiduous; the wine was disposed in order; and two very well-dressed dishes were brought in.

My daughter had not yet heard of her poor brother’s melancholy situation, and we all seemed unwilling to damp her cheerfulness by the relation; but it was in vain that I attempted to appear cheerful: the circumstances of my unfortunate son arose through all efforts to dissemble; so that I was at last obliged to damp our mirth, by relating his misfortunes, and wishing he might be permitted to share with us in this little interval of satisfaction. After my guests were recovered from the consternation my account had produced, I requested also that Mr. Jenkinson, a fellow-prisoner, might be admitted; and the jailer granted my request with an air of submission. The clanking of my son’s irons was no sooner heard along the passage, than his sister ran impatiently to meet him; while Mr. Burchell, in the mean time, asked me if my son’s name was George; to which replying in the affirmative, he still continued silent. As soon as my boy entered the room, I could perceive he regarded Mr. Burchell with a look of astonishment and reverence. ‘Come on,’ cried I, ‘my son: though we are low, yet Providence has been pleased to grant us

some small relaxation from pain. Thy sister is restored to us, and there is her deliverer : to that brave man it is that I am indebted for yet having a daughter. Give him, my boy, the hand of friendship ; he deserves our warmest gratitude.'

My son seemed all this while regardless of what I said, and still continued fixed at a respectful distance. ' My dear brother,' cried his sister, ' why don't you thank my good deliverer ? The brave should ever love each other.'

He still continued his silence and astonishment ; till our guest at last perceived himself to be known, and, assuming all his native dignity, desired my son to come forward. Never before had I seen any thing so truly majestic as the air he assumed upon this occasion. The greatest object in the universe, says a certain philosopher, is a good man struggling with adversity ; yet there is still a greater, which is, the good man that comes to relieve it. After he had regarded my son some time with a superior air, ' I again find,' said he, ' unthinking boy, that the same crime——' But here he was interrupted by one of the jailer's servants, who came to inform us that a person of distinction, who had driven into town with a chariot and several attendants, sent his respects to the gentleman that was with us, and begged to know when he should think proper to be waited upon. ' Bid the fellow wait,' cried our guest, ' till I shall have leisure to receive him : ' and then, turning to my son, ' I again find, sir,' proceeded he, ' that you are guilty of the same offence for which you once had my reproof, and for which the law is now preparing its justest punishments. You imagine, perhaps, that a contempt for your own life gives you a right to take that of another ; but where, sir, is the difference between a duellist who hazards a life of no value, and the murderer who acts with greater security ? Is it any diminution of the gamester's fraud, when he alleges that he staked a counter ?'

' Alas, sir ! ' cried I, ' whoever you are, pity the poor misguided creature : for what he has done was in obedience to a deluded mother, who, in the bitterness of her resentment, required him, upon her blessing, to avenge



her quarrel. Here, sir, is the letter, which will serve to convince you of her imprudence, and diminish his guilt.'

He took the letter, and hastily read it over. 'This,' says he, 'though not a perfect excuse, is such a palliation of his fault, as induces me to forgive him. And now, sir,' continued he, kindly taking my son by the hand, 'I see you are surprised at finding me here; but I have often visited prisons upon occasions less interesting. I am now come to see justice done a worthy man, for whom I have the most sincere esteem. I have long been a disguised spectator of thy father's benevolence: I have, at his little dwelling, enjoyed respect, uncontaminated by flattery; and have received that happiness, that courts could not give, from the amusing simplicity round his fire-side. My nephew has been apprised of my intentions of coming here, and I find he is arrived: it would be wronging him and you, to condemn him without examination: if there be injury, there shall be redress; and this I may say without boasting, that none have taxed the injustice of Sir William Thornhill.'

We now found, that the personage, whom we had long entertained as a harmless, amusing companion, was no other than the celebrated Sir William Thornhill, to whose virtues and singularities scarce any were strangers. The poor Mr. Burchell was in reality a man of large fortune and great interest, to whom senates listened with applause, and whom party heard with conviction; who was the friend of his country, but loyal to his king. My poor wife, recollecting her former familiarity, seemed to shrink with apprehension; but Sophia, who, a few moments before, thought him her own, now perceiving the immense distance to which he was removed by fortune, was unable to conceal her tears.

'Ah, sir,' cried my wife, with a piteous aspect, 'how is it possible that I can ever have your forgiveness? The slights you received from me, the last time I had the honour of seeing you at our house, and the jokes which I audaciously threw out—these, sir, I fear, can never be  
7.'

'My dear, good lady,' returned he, with a smile, 'if you had your joke, I had my answer: I'll leave it to all the company, if mine were not as good as yours. To say the truth, I know nobody whom I am disposed to be angry with at present, but the fellow who so frightened my little girl here. I had not even time to examine the rascal's person, so as to describe him in an advertisement. Can you tell me, Sophia, my dear, whether you should know him again?'

'Indeed, sir,' replied she, 'I cannot be positive; yet, now I recollect, he had a large mark over one of his eye-brows.'—'I ask pardon, madam,' interrupted Jenkinson, who was by; 'but be so good as to inform me if the fellow wore his own red hair.'—'Yes, I think so,' cried Sophia. 'And did your honour,' continued he, turning to Sir William, 'observe the length of his legs?'—'I can't be sure of their length,' cried the baronet; 'but I am convinced of their swiftness; for he outran me, which is what I thought few men in the kingdom could have done.'—'Please your honour,' cried Jenkinson, 'I know the man; it is certainly the same; the best runner in England: he has beaten Pinwire of Newcastle; Timothy Baxter is his name: I know him perfectly, and the very place of his retreat this moment. If your honour will bid Mr. Jailer let two of his men go with me, I'll engage to produce him to you in an hour at farthest.' Upon this, the jailer was called, who instantly appearing, Sir William demanded if he knew him. 'Yes, please your honour,' replied the jailer, 'I know Sir William Thornhill well; and every body that knows any thing of him, will desire to know more of him.'—'Well, then,' said the baronet, 'my request is, that you will permit this man and two of your servants to go upon a message, by my authority; and, as I am in the commission of the peace, I undertake to secure you.'—'Your promise is sufficient,' replied the other: 'and you may, at a minute's warning, send them over England whenever your honour thinks fit.'

In pursuance of the jailer's compliance, Jenkinson was despatched in pursuit of Timothy Baxter, while we were

amused with the assiduity of our youngest boy, Bill, who had just come in, and climbed up to Sir William's neck, in order to kiss him. His mother was immediately going to chastise his familiarity, but the worthy man prevented her; and, taking the child, all ragged as he was, upon his knee, 'What, Bill, you chubby rogue!' cried he, 'do you remember your old friend Burchell? And Dick, too, my honest veteran, are you here? you shall find I have not forgot you.' So saying, he gave each a large piece of gingerbread, which the poor fellows ate very heartily, as they had got that morning but a very scanty breakfast.

We now sat down to dinner, which was almost cold: but, previously, my arm still continuing painful, Sir William wrote a prescription; for he had made the study of physic his amusement, and was more than moderately skilled in the profession: this being sent to an apothecary, who lived in the place, my arm was dressed, and I found almost instantaneous relief. We were waited upon at dinner by the jailer himself, who was willing to do our guest all the honour in his power: but before we had well dined, another message was brought from his nephew, desiring permission to appear, in order to vindicate his innocence and honour; with which request the baronet complied, and desired Mr. Thornhill to be introduced.

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CHAP. XXXI.—Former benevolence now repaid with unexpected interest.

Mr. Thornhill made his entrance with a smile, which he seldom wanted, and was going to embrace his uncle, which the other repulsed with an air of disdain. 'No fawning, sir, at present,' cried the baronet, with a look of severity; 'the only way to my heart is by the road of honour; but here I only see complicated instances of falsehood, cowardice, and oppression. How is it, sir, that this poor man, for whom I know you professed a friendship, is used thus hardly? His daughter vilely repaid, as a recompense for his hospitality; and he

himself thrown into prison, perhaps but for resenting the insult? His son too, whom you feared to face as a man——

‘Is it possible, sir,’ interrupted his nephew, ‘that my uncle should object that as a crime, which his repeated instructions alone have persuaded me to avoid?’

‘Your rebuke,’ cried Sir William, ‘is just: you have acted in this instance prudently and well, though not quite as your father would have done: my brother, indeed, was the soul of honour, but thou——yes, you have acted in this instance perfectly right, and it has my warmest approbation.’

‘And I hope,’ said his nephew, ‘that the rest of my conduct will not be found to deserve censure. I appeared, sir, with this gentleman’s daughter at some places of public amusement; thus, what was levity, scandal called by a harsher name, and it was reported that I had debauched her. I waited on her father in person, willing to clear the thing to his satisfaction, and he received me only with insult and abuse. As for the rest, with regard to his being here, my attorney and steward can best inform you, as I commit the management of business entirely to them. If he has contracted debts, and is unwilling, or even unable to pay them, it is their business to proceed in this manner; and I see no hardship or injustice in pursuing the most legal means of redress.’

‘If this,’ cried Sir William, ‘be as you have stated it, there is nothing unpardonable in your offences; and, though your conduct might have been more generous, is not suffering this gentleman to be oppressed by subordinate tyranny, yet it has been at least equitable.’

‘He cannot contradict a single particular,’ replied the squire: ‘I defy him to do so; and several of my servants are ready to attest what I say. Thus, sir,’ continued he, finding that I was silent, for in fact I could not contradict him: ‘thus, sir, my own innocence is vindicated; but, though at your entreaty I am ready to forgive this gentleman every other offence, yet his attempts to lessen me in your esteem excite a resentment that I cannot govern; and this, too, at a time when his son was actu-

ally preparing to take away my life: this, I say, was such guilt, that I am determined to let the law take its course. I have here the challenge that was sent me, and two witnesses to prove it: one of my servants has been wounded dangerously; and even though my uncle himself should dissuade me, which I know he will not, yet I will see public justice done, and he shall suffer for it.'

'Thou monster,' cried my wife, 'hast thou not had vengeance enough already, but must my poor boy feel thy cruelty? I hope that good Sir William will protect us, for my son is as innocent as a child; I am sure he is, and never did harm to man.'

'Madam,' replied the good man, 'your wishes for his safety are not greater than mine, but I am sorry to find his guilt too plain; and if my nephew persists——' But the appearance of Jenkinson and the jailer's two servants now called off our attention, who entered hauling in a tall man, very genteelly dressed, and answering the description already given of the ruffian who had carried off my daughter. 'Here,' cried Jenkinson, pulling him in, 'here we have him; and if ever there was a candidate for Tyburn, this is one.'

The moment Mr. Thornhill perceived the prisoner, and Jenkinson who had him in custody, he seemed to shrink backward with terror. His face became pale with conscious guilt, and he would have withdrawn; but Jenkinson, who perceived his design, stopped him. 'What, squire,' cried he, 'are you ashamed of your two old acquaintances, Jenkinson and Baxter? But this is the way that all great men forget their friends; though I am resolved we will not forget you. Our prisoner, please your honour,' continued he, turning to Sir William, 'has already confessed all. This is the gentleman reported to be dangerously wounded: he declares that it was Mr. Thornhill who first put him upon the affair; that he gave him the clothes he now wears, to appear like a gentleman, and furnished him with a post-chaise. The plan was laid between them, that he should carry off the young lady to a place of safety, and that there he should attack and terrify her; but Mr. Thornhill was to come

in, in the mean time, as if by accident, to her rescue, and that they should fight awhile, and then he was to run off, by which Mr. Thornhill would have the better opportunity of gaining her affections himself under the character of her defender.'

Sir William remembered the coat to have been frequently worn by his nephew; and all the rest the prisoner himself confirmed, by a more circumstantial account, concluding, that Mr. Thornhill had often declared to him, that he was in love with both sisters at the same time.

'Heavens!' cried Sir William, 'what a viper have I been fostering in my bosom! And so fond of public justice, too, as he seemed to be! But he shall have it. Secure him, Mr. Jailer! yet, hold; I fear there is no legal evidence to detain him.'

Upon this, Mr. Thornhill, with the utmost humility, entreated that two such abandoned wretches might not be admitted as evidences against him; but that his servants should be examined. 'Your servants?' replied Sir William; 'wretch, call them yours no longer: but come, let us hear what those fellows have to say; let his butler be called.'

When the butler was introduced, he soon perceived, by his former master's looks, that all his power was now over. 'Tell me,' cried Sir William, sternly, 'have you ever seen your master, and that fellow dressed up in his clothes, in company together?'—'Yes, please your honour,' cried the butler, 'a thousand times: he was the man that always brought him his ladies.' How! interrupted young Mr. Thornhill; 'this to my face?'—'Yes,' replied the butler, 'or to any man's face. To tell you a truth, Master Thornhill, I never either loved you or liked you, and I don't care if I tell you now a piece of my mind.'—'Now then,' cried Jenkinson, 'tell his honour whether you know any thing of me.'—'I can't say,' replied the butler, 'that I know much good of you. The night that gentleman's daughter was deluded to our house, you was one of them.'—'So then,' cried Sir William, 'I find you have brought a very fine witness to prove your innocence.'

thou stain to humanity ! to associate with such wretches ! But,' continuing his examination, ' you tell me, Mr. Butler, that this was the person who brought him this old gentleman's daughter.'—' No, please your honour,' replied the butler, ' he did not bring her, for the acquire himself undertook that business ; but he brought the priest, that pretended to marry them.'—' It is but too true,' cried Jenkinson : ' I cannot deny it ; that was the employment assigned to me ; and I confess it to my confusion.'

' Good Heavens !' exclaimed the worthy baronet, ' how every new discovery of his villany alarms me ! All his guilt is now too plain, and I find his present prosecution was dictated by tyranny, cowardice, and revenge. At my request, Mr. Jailer, set this young officer, now your prisoner, free, and trust to me for the consequences : I'll make it my business to set the affair in a proper light to my friend the magistrate, who has committed him. But where is the unfortunate young lady herself ? let her appear to confront this wretch : I long to know by what arts he has seduced her. Entreat her to come in. Where is she ?'

' Ah ! sir,' said I, ' that question stings me to the heart ; I was once indeed happy in a daughter, but her miseries——' Another interruption here prevented me ; for who should make her appearance but Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was the next day to have been married to Mr. Thornhill. Nothing could equal her surprise at seeing Sir William and his nephew here before her ; for her arrival was quite accidental. It happened that she and the old gentleman, her father, were passing through the town, on their way to her aunt's, who had insisted that her nuptials with Mr. Thornhill should be consummated at her house ; but, stopping for refreshment, they put up at an inn at the other end of the town. It was there, from the window, that the young lady happened to observe one of my little boys playing in the street ; and, instantly sending a footman to bring the child to her, she learned from him some account of our misfortunes, but was still kept ignorant of young Mr. Thornhill's being the cause. Though her father made several remonstrances on the impropriety of her going to

a prison to visit us, yet they were ineffectual : she desired the child to conduct her, which he did ; and it was thus she surprised us at a juncture so unexpected.

Nor can I go on, without a reflection on those accidental meetings, which, though they happen every day, seldom excite our surprise but upon some extraordinary occasion. To what a fortuitous occurrence do we not owe every pleasure and convenience of our lives ! How many seeming accidents must unite before we can be clothed or fed ! The peasant must be disposed to labour, the shower must fall, the wind fill the merchant's sail, or numbers must want the usual supply.

We all continued silent for some moments, while my charming pupil, which was the name I generally gave this young lady, united in her looks compassion and astonishment, which gave new finishing to her beauty. ' Indeed, my dear Mr. Thornhill,' cried she to the squire, who she supposed was come here to succour, and not to oppress us, ' I take it a little unkindly that you should come here without me, or never inform me of the situation of a family so dear to us both. You know I should take as much pleasure in contributing to the relief of my reverend old master here, whom I shall ever esteem, as you can : but I find that, like your uncle, you take a pleasure in doing good in secret.'

' He find pleasure in doing good ?' cried Sir William, interrupting her : ' no, my dear, his pleasures are as base as he is. You see in him, madam, as complete a villain as ever disgraced humanity ; a wretch, who, after having deluded this poor man's daughter, after plotting against the innocence of her sister, has thrown the father into prison, and the eldest son into fetters, because he had the courage to face his betrayer ! And give me leave, madam, now to congratulate you upon an escape from the embraces of such a monster.'

' O goodness,' cried the lovely girl, ' how have I been deceived ! Mr. Thornhill informed me, for certain, that this gentleman's eldest son, captain Primrose, was gone off to America with his new-married lady.'

' My sweetest miss,' cried my wife, ' he has told you



nothing but falsehoods. My son George never left the kingdom, nor ever was married: though you have forsaken him, he has always loved you too well to think of any body else; and I have heard him say he would die a bachelor for your sake.' She then proceeded to expatiate upon the sincerity of her son's passion; she set his duel with Mr. Thornhill in a proper light; from thence she made a rapid digression to the squire's debaucheries, his pretended marriages, and ended with a most insulting picture of his cowardice.

'Good Heavens!' cried Miss Wilmot, 'how very near have I been to the brink of ruin! but how great is my pleasure to have escaped it! Ten thousand falsehoods has this gentleman told me. He had at last art enough to persuade me that my promise to the only man I esteemed was no longer binding, since he had been unfaithful. By his falsehoods, I was taught to detest one equally brave and generous.'

But by this time my son was freed from the encumbrances of justice, as the person supposed to be wounded was detected to be an impostor: Mr. Jenkinson also, who had acted as his valet-de-chambre, had dressed up his hair, and furnished him with whatever was necessary to make a genteel appearance. He now, therefore, entered, handsomely dressed in his regimentals; and, without vanity, (for I am above it) he appeared as handsome a fellow as ever wore a military dress. As he entered, he made Miss Wilmot a modest and distant bow, for he was not as yet acquainted with the change which the eloquence of his mother had wrought in his favour. But no decorums could restrain the impatience of his blushing mistress to be forgiven: her tears, her looks, all contributed to discover the real sensations of her heart, for having forgotten her former promise, and having suffered herself to be deluded by an impostor. My son appeared amazed at her condescension, and could scarce believe it real. 'Sure, madam,' cried he, 'this is but delusion! I can never have merited this! To be blessed thus, is to be too happy!'—'No, sir,' replied she, 'I have been deceived, basely deceived; else nothing could have ever

made me unjust to my promise. You know my friendship, you have long known it; but forget what I have done; and, as you once had my warmest vows of constancy, you shall now have them repeated; and be assured, that if your Arabella cannot be yours, she shall never be another's.—‘And no other’s you shall be,’ cried Sir William, ‘if I have any influence with your father.’

This hint was sufficient for my son Moses, who immediately flew to the inn where the old gentleman was, to inform him of every circumstance that had happened. But in the mean time, the squire, perceiving that he was on every side undone, now finding that no hopes were left from flattery or dissimulation, concluded that his wisest way would be to turn and face his pursuers. Thus laying aside all shame, he appeared the open and hardy villain. ‘I find then,’ cried he, ‘that I am to expect no justice here; but I am resolved it shall be done me. You shall know, sir,’ turning to Sir William, ‘I am no longer a poor dependent upon your favours: I scorn them. Nothing can keep Miss Wilmot’s fortune from me, which, I thank her father’s assiduity, is pretty large. The articles, and a bond for her fortune, are signed, and safe in my possession. It was her fortune, not her person, that induced me to wish for this match; and, possessed of the one, let who will take the other.’

This was an alarming blow: Sir William was sensible of the justness of his claims, for he had been instrumental in drawing up the marriage-articles himself. Miss Wilmot therefore, perceiving that her fortune was irretrievably lost, turning to my son, asked if the loss of fortune could lessen her value to him. ‘Though fortune,’ said she, ‘is out of my power, at least I have my hand to give.’

‘And that, madam,’ cried her real lover, ‘was, indeed, all that you ever had to give; at least, all that I ever thought worth the acceptance: and I now protest, my Arabella, by all that’s happy, your want of fortune this moment increases my pleasure, as it serves to convince my sweet girl of my sincerity.’

Mr. Wilmot now entering, he seemed not a little pleased at the danger his daughter had just escaped, and

readily consented to a dissolution of the match; but, finding that her fortune, which was secured to Mr. Thornhill by bond, would not be given up, nothing could exceed his disappointment. He now saw that his money must all go to enrich one who had no fortune of his own: he could bear his being a rascal; but to want an equivalent to his daughter's fortune was wormwood. He sat, therefore, for some minutes, employed in the most mortifying speculations, till Sir William attempted to lessen his anxiety. 'I must confess, sir,' cried he, 'that your present disappointment does not entirely displease me. Your immoderate passion for wealth is now justly punished. But though the young lady cannot be rich, she has still a sufficient competence to give content. Here you see an honest young soldier, who is willing to take her without fortune: they have long loved each other; and for the friendship I bear his father, my interest shall not be wanting in his promotion. Leave, then, that ambition which disappoints you, and for once admit that happiness which courts your acceptance.'

'Sir William,' replied the old gentleman, 'be assured, I never yet forced her inclinations, nor will I now. If she still continues to love this young gentleman, let her have him with all my heart. There is still, thank Heaven, some fortune left, and your promise will make it something more. Only let my old friend here,' meaning me, 'give me a promise of settling six thousand pounds upon my girl, if ever he should come to his fortune, and I am ready this night to be the first to join them together.'

As it now remained with me to make the young couple happy, I readily gave a promise of making the settlement he required; which, to one who had such little expectations as I, was no great favour. We had now therefore the satisfaction of seeing them fly into each other's arms in a transport. 'After all my misfortunes,' cried my son George, 'to be thus rewarded! Sure, this is more than I could ever have presumed to hope for. To be possessed of all that's good, and after such an interval of pain! my warmest wishes could never rise so high.'—'Yes, my George,' returned his lovely bride, 'now let

the wretch take my fortune: since you are happy without it, so am I. O, what an exchange have I made from the basest of men to the dearest, best! Let him enjoy our fortune; I now can be happy even in indigence.'—  
'And I promise you,' cried the squire with a malicious grin, 'that I shall be very happy with what you despise.'—  
'Hold, hold, sir,' cried Jenkinson; 'there are two words to that bargain. As for that lady's fortune, sir, you shall never touch a single stiver of it. Pray, your honour,' continued he to sir William, 'can the squire have this lady's fortune if he be married to another?'—  
'How can you make such a simple demand?' replied the baronet: 'undoubtedly he cannot.'—  
'I am sorry for that,' cried Jenkinson: 'for as this gentleman and I have been old fellow-sporters, I have a friendship for him: but I must declare, well as I love him, that his contract is not worth a tobacco-stopper, for he is married already.'—  
'You lie like a rascal,' returned the squire, who seemed roused by this insult; 'I never was legally married to any woman.'—  
'Indeed, begging your honour's pardon,' replied the other, 'you were: and I hope you will show a proper return of friendship to your own honest Jenkinson, who brings you a wife; and if the company restrain their curiosity a few minutes, they shall see her.' So saying, he went off with his usual celerity, and left us all unable to form any probable conjecture as to his design. 'Ay, let him go,' cried the squire: 'whatever else I may have done, I defy him there: I am too old now to be frightened with squibs.'

'I am surprised,' said the baronet, 'what the fellow can intend by this; some low piece of humour, I suppose.'—  
'Perhaps, sir,' replied I, 'he may have a more serious meaning: for when we reflect on the various schemes this gentleman has laid to seduce innocence, perhaps some one, more artful than the rest, has been found able to deceive him. When we consider what numbers he has ruined, how many parents now feel with anguish the infamy and the contamination which he has brought into their families, it would not surprise me, if some of them——Amazement! Do I see my lost

daughter? Do I hold her? It is, my life, my happiness! I thought thee lost, my Olivia, yet still I hold thee, and still thou shalt live to bless me!’ The warmest transports of the fondest lover were not greater than mine, when I saw him introduce my child, and held my daughter in my arms, whose silence only spoke her raptures. ‘And art thou returned to me, my darling,’ cried I, ‘to be my comfort in age?’—‘That she is,’ cried Jenkinson; ‘and make much of her, for she is your own honourable child, and as honest a woman as any in the whole room, let the other be who she will: and as for you, squire, as sure as you stand there, this young lady is your lawful wedded wife: and to convince you that I speak nothing but the truth, here is the license by which you were married together.’ So saying, he put the license into the baronet’s hands, who read it, and found it perfect in every respect. —‘And now, gentlemen,’ continued he, ‘I find you are surprised at all this; but a very few words will explain the difficulty. That there squire of renown, for whom I have a great friendship, (but that’s between ourselves) has often employed me in doing odd little things for him. Among the rest, he commissioned me to procure him a false license and a false priest, in order to deceive this young lady: but as I was very much his friend, what did I do, but went and got a true license and a true priest, and married them both as fast as the cloth could make them? Perhaps you’ll think it was generosity made me do all this. But, no: to my shame I confess it, my only design was to keep the license, and let the squire know that I could prove it upon him, whenever I thought proper; and so make him come down whenever I wanted money.’ A burst of pleasure now seemed to fill the whole apartment; our joy even reached the common room, where the prisoners themselves sympathized,

— and shook their chains  
In transport and rude harmony.

Happiness was expanded upon every face, and even Olivia’s cheeks seemed flushed with pleasure. To be thus restored to reputation, to friends, and fortune at

once, was a rapture sufficient to stop the progress of decay, and restore former health and vivacity. But, perhaps, among all, there was not one who felt sincerer pleasure than I. Still holding the dear loved child in my arms, I asked my heart if these transports were not delusion.

‘How could you,’ cried I, turning to Jenkinson, ‘how could you add to my miseries by the story of her death? But it matters not; my pleasure at finding her again is more than a recompense for the pain.’

‘As to your question,’ replied Jenkinson, ‘that is easily answered. I thought the only probable means of freeing you from prison, was by submitting to the squire, and consenting to his marriage with the other young lady: but these you had vowed never to grant while your daughter was living; there was, therefore, no other method to bring things to bear, but by persuading you that she was dead. I prevailed on your wife to join in the deceit, and we have not had a fit opportunity of undeceiving you till now.’

In the whole assembly there now appeared only two faces that did not glow with transport. Mr. Thornhill’s assurance had entirely forsaken him: he now saw the gulf of infamy and want before him, and trembled to take the plunge: he therefore fell on his knees before his uncle, and in a voice of piercing misery implored compassion. Sir William was going to spurn him away, but at my request he raised him, and, after pausing a few moments, ‘Thy vices, crimes, and ingratitude,’ cried he, ‘deserve no tenderness; yet thou shalt not be entirely forsaken: a bare competence shall be supplied to support the wants of life, but not its follies. This young lady, thy wife, shall be put in possession of a third part of that fortune which once was thine; and from her tenderness alone thou art to expect any extraordinary supplies for the future.’ He was going to express his gratitude for such kindness in a set speech; but the baronet prevented him, by bidding him not aggravate his meanness, which was already but too apparent. He ordered him at the same time to be gone, and from all his former domestics to choose one, and such as he should think

proper, which was all that should be granted to attend him.

As soon as he left us, Sir William very politely stepped up to his new niece with a smile, and wished her joy. His example was followed by Miss Wilmot and her father: my wife, too, kissed her daughter with much affection; as, to use her own expression, she was now made an honest woman of. Sophia and Moses followed in turn, and even our benefactor Jenkinson desired to be admitted to that honour. Our satisfaction seemed scarce capable of increase. Sir William, whose greatest pleasure was in doing good, now looked round, with a countenance open as the sun, and saw nothing but joy in the looks of all, except that of my daughter Sophia, who, for some reasons we could not comprehend, did not seem perfectly satisfied. 'I think now,' cried he, with a smile, 'that all the company, except one or two, seem perfectly happy. There only remains an act of justice for me to do. You are sensible, sir,' continued he, turning to me, 'of the obligations we both owe to Mr. Jenkinson; and it is but just we should both reward him for it. Miss Sophia will, I am sure, make him very happy, and he shall have from me five hundred pounds as her fortune; and upon this I am sure they can live very comfortably together. Come, Miss Sophia, what say you to this match of my making? will you have him?' My poor girl seemed almost sinking into her mother's arms at the hideous proposal. 'Have him, sir?' cried she faintly; 'no, sir, never.'—'What!' cried he again, 'not Mr. Jenkinson, your benefactor; a handsome young fellow, with five hundred pounds, and good expectations?'—'I beg, sir,' returned she, scarce able to speak, 'that you'll desist, and not make me so very wretched.'—'Was ever such obstinacy known?' cried he again, 'to refuse the man whom the family has such infinite obligations to, who has preserved your sister, and who has five hundred pounds? What, not have him?'—'No, sir, never,' replied she, angrily; 'I'd sooner die first.'—'If that be the case, then,' cried he: 'if you will not have him—I think I must have you myself.' And so saying, he caught her to his breast with ardour:—'My

loveliest, my most sensible of girls,' cried he, 'how could you ever think your own Burchell could deceive you, or that Sir William Thornhill could ever cease to admire a mistress that loved him for himself alone? I have for some years sought for a woman, who, a stranger to my fortune, could think I had merit as a man. After having tried in vain, even among the pert and the ugly, how great at last must be my rapture, to have made a conquest over such sense and such heavenly beauty!' Then turning to Jenkinson, 'As I cannot, sir, part with this young lady myself, (for she has taken a fancy to the cut of my face) all the recompense I can make is, to give you her fortune, and you may call upon my steward to-morrow for five hundred pounds.' Thus we had all our compliments to repeat, and Lady Thornhill underwent the same round of ceremony that her sister had done before. In the mean time, Sir William's gentleman appeared to tell us that the equipages were ready to carry us to the inn, where every thing was prepared for our reception. My wife and I led the van, and left those gloomy mansions of sorrow. The generous baronet ordered forty pounds to be distributed among the prisoners; and Mr. Wilmot, induced by his example, gave half that sum. We were received below by the shouts of the villagers, and I saw and shook by the hand two or three of my honest parishioners, who were among the number. They attended us to our inn, where a sumptuous entertainment was provided, and coarser provisions distributed in great quantities among the populace.

After supper, as my spirits were exhausted by the alternation of pleasure and pain which they had sustained during the day, I asked permission to withdraw; and leaving the company in the midst of their mirth, as soon as I found myself alone, I poured out my heart in gratitude to the Giver of joy as well as sorrow, and then slept undisturbed till morning.

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## CHAP. XXXII.—The conclusion.

The next morning, as soon as I awaked, I found my eldest son sitting at my bed-side, who came to increase my joy with another turn of fortune in my favour. First, having released me from the settlement that I had made the day before in his favour, he let me know that my merchant, who had failed in town, was arrested at Antwerp, and there had given up effects to a much greater amount than what was due to his creditors. My boy's generosity pleased me almost as much as this unlooked-for good fortune; but I had some doubts whether I ought in justice to accept his offer. While I was pondering upon this, Sir William entered the room, to whom I communicated my doubts. His opinion was, that as my son was already possessed of a very affluent fortune by his marriage, I might accept his offer without hesitation. His business, however, was to inform me, that as he had the night before sent for the licenses, and expected them every hour, he hoped that I would not refuse my assistance in making all the company happy that morning. A footman entered while we were speaking, to tell us that the messenger was returned; and as I was by this time ready, I went down, where I found the whole company as merry as affluence and innocence could make them. However, as they were now preparing for a very solemn ceremony, their laughter entirely displeased me. I told them of the grave, becoming, and sublime deportment they should assume upon this mystical occasion, and read them two homilies and a thesis of my own composing, in order to prepare them; yet they still seemed perfectly refractory and ungovernable. Even as we were going along to church, to which I led the way, all gravity had quite forsaken them, and I was often tempted to turn back in indignation. In church a new dilemma arose, which promised no easy solution: this was, which couple should be married first; my son's bride warmly insisted that Lady Thornhill (that was to be) should take the lead; but this the other refused with equal ardour, protesting she would not be guilty of such rudeness for the world.

The argument was supported for some time between both with equal obstinacy and good breeding; but as I stood all this time with my book ready, I was at last quite tired of the contest, and, shutting it, 'I perceive,' cried I, 'that none of you have a mind to be married, and I think we had as good go back again; for I suppose there will be no business done here to-day.' This at once reduced them to reason: the baronet and his lady were first married, and then my son and his lovely partner.

I had previously that morning given orders that a coach should be sent for my honest neighbour Flamborough and his family; by which means, upon our return to the inn, we had the pleasure of finding the two Miss Flamboroughs alighted before us. Mr. Jenkinson gave his hand to the eldest, and my son Moses led up the other; and I have since found that he has taken a real liking to the girl, and my consent and bounty he shall have whenever he thinks proper to demand them. We were no sooner returned to the inn, but numbers of my parishioners, hearing of my success, came to congratulate me; but among the rest were those who rose to rescue me, and whom I formerly rebuked with such sharpness. I told the story to Sir William, my son-in-law, who went out, and reprov'd them with great severity; but finding them quite disheartened by this harsh reproof, he gave them half-a-guinea a piece to drink his health, and raise their dejected spirits.

Soon after this we were called to a very genteel entertainment, which was dressed by Mr. Thornhill's cook. And it may not be improper to observe, with respect to that gentleman, that he now resides in quality of companion at a relation's house, being very well liked, and seldom sitting at the side-table, except when there is no room at the other, for they make no stranger of him: his time is pretty much taken up in keeping his relation, who is a little melancholy, in spirits, and in learning to blow the French-horn. My eldest daughter, however, still remembers him with regret; and she has even told me, though I make a great secret of it, that when he reforms she may be brought to relent. But to return, for

I am not apt to digress thus : when we were to sit down to dinner, our ceremonies were going to be renewed. The question was, whether my eldest daughter, as being a matron, should not sit above the two young brides ; but the debate was cut short by my son George, who proposed that the company should sit indiscriminately, every gentleman by his lady : this was received with great approbation by all, excepting my wife, who I could perceive was not perfectly satisfied, as she expected to have had the pleasure of sitting at the head of the table, and carving the meat for all the company. But notwithstanding this, it is impossible to describe our good-humour. I can't say whether we had more wit among us now than usual ; but I am certain we had more laughing, which answered the end as well. One jest I particularly remember : old Mr. Wilmot drinking to Moses, whose head was turned another way, my son replied, ' Madam, I thank you : ' upon which, the old gentleman, winking upon the rest of the company, observed that he was thinking of his mistress ; at which jest I thought the two Miss Flamboroughs would have died with laughing. As soon as dinner was over, according to my old custom, I requested that the table might be taken away, to have the pleasure of seeing all my family assembled once more by a cheerful fire-side. My two little ones sat upon each knee ; the rest of the company by their partners. I had nothing now on this side the grave to wish for : all my cares were over ; my pleasure was unspeakable : it now only remained, that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my former submission in adversity.

THE END.

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THE

ADVENTURES

OF

SIR LAUNCELOT GREAVES.

BY

TOBIAS SMOLLETT, M.D.

WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

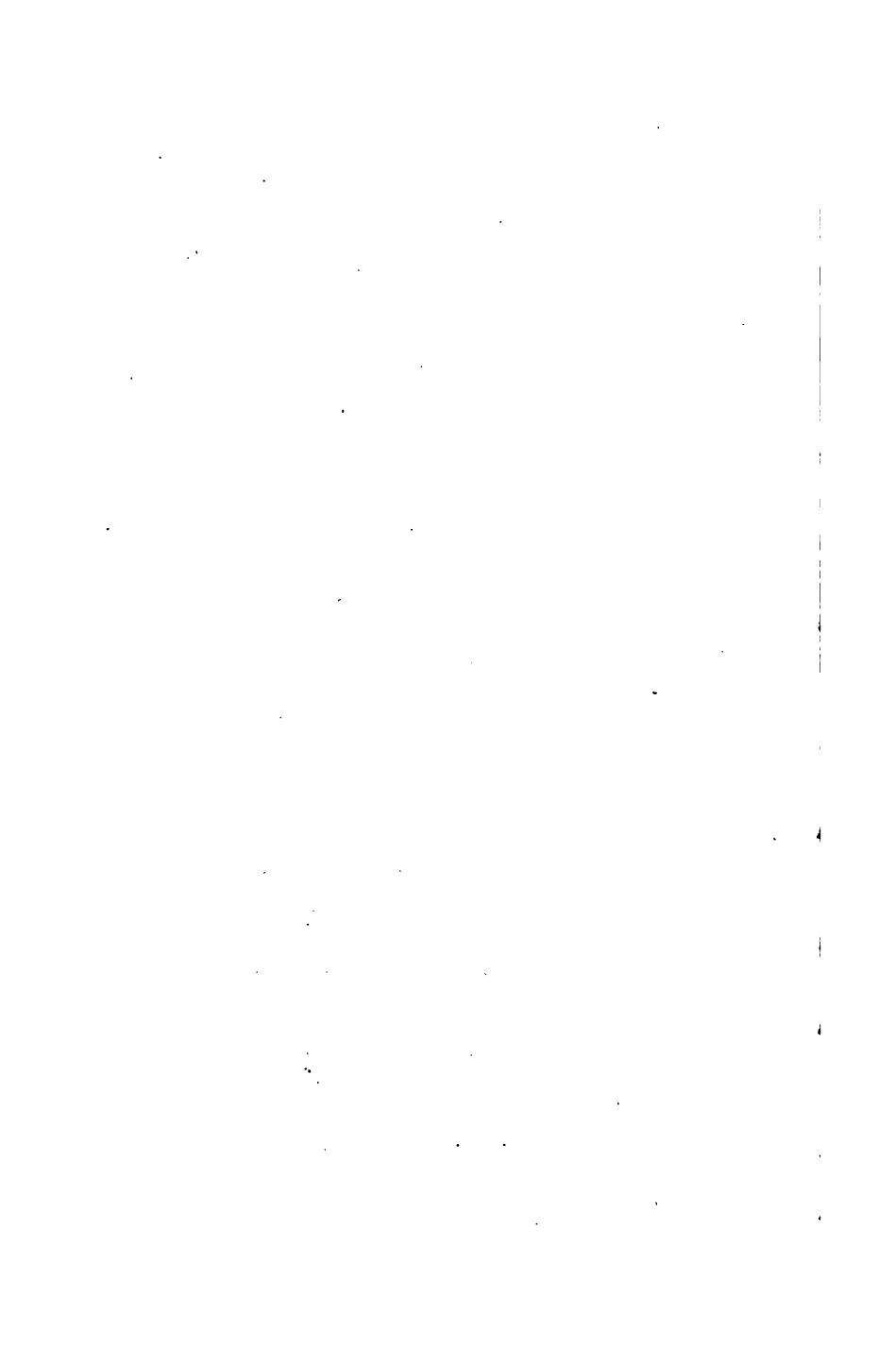
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LONDON:

JAMES COCHRANE AND CO.,

11, WATERLOO PLACE, FALL MALL.

1832.



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THE  
ADVENTURES  
OF  
SIR LAUNCELOT GREAVES.

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CHAP. I.—In which certain personages of this delightful history are introduced to the reader's acquaintance.

IT was on the great northern road from York to London, about the beginning of the month October, and the hour of eight in the evening, that four travellers were, by a violent shower of rain, driven for shelter into a little public-house on the side of the highway, distinguished by a sign, which was said to exhibit the figure of a Black Lion. The kitchen, in which they assembled, was the only room for entertainment in the house, paved with red brick, remarkably clean, furnished with three or four Windsor chairs, adorned with shining plates of pewter and copper saucepans nicely scoured, that even dazzled the eyes of the beholder; while a cheerful fire of sea-coal blazed in the chimney. Three of the travellers, who arrived on horseback, having seen their cattle properly accommodated in the stable, agreed to pass the time, until the weather should clear up, over a bowl of rumbo, which was accordingly prepared: but the fourth, refusing to join their company, took his station at



the opposite side of the chimney, and called for a pint of twopenny, with which he indulged himself apart. At a little distance, on his left hand, there was another group, consisting of the landlady, a decent widow, her two daughters, the elder of whom seemed to be about the age of fifteen, and a country lad, who served both as waiter and ostler.

The social triumvirate was composed of Mr. Fillet, a country practitioner in surgery and midwifery, captain Crowe, and his nephew Mr. Thomas Clarke, an attorney. Fillet was a man of some education, and a great deal of experience, shrewd, sly, and sensible. Captain Crowe had commanded a merchant-ship in the Mediterranean trade for many years, and saved some money by dint of frugality and traffic. He was an excellent seaman, brave, active, friendly in his way, and scrupulously honest; but as little acquainted with the world as a sucking child; whimsical, impatient, and so impetuous, that he could not help breaking in upon the conversation, whatever it might be, with repeated interruptions, that seemed to burst from him by involuntary impulse: when he himself attempted to speak, he never finished his period; but made such a number of transitions, that his discourse seemed to be an unconnected series of unfinished sentences, the meaning of which it was not easy to decipher. His nephew, Tom Clarke, was a young fellow, whose goodness of heart even the exercise of his profession had not been able to corrupt. Before strangers, he never owned himself an attorney without blushing, though he had no reason to blush for his own practice; for he constantly refused to engage in the cause of any client whose character was equivocal, and was never known to act with such industry as when concerned for the widow and the orphan, or any other object that sued *in forma pauperis*. Indeed, he was so replete with human kindness, that, as often as an affecting story or circumstance was told in his hearing, it overflowed at his eyes. Being of a warm complexion, he was very susceptible of passion, and somewhat libertine in his amours. In other respects, he piqued himself on understanding the practice of the

courts; and, in private company, he took pleasure in laying down the law; but he was an indifferent orator, and tediously circumstantial in his explanations. His stature was rather diminutive; but, upon the whole, he had some title to the character of a pretty, dapper little fellow. The solitary guest had something very forbidding in his aspect, which was contracted by an habitual frown. His eyes were small and red, and so deep set in the sockets, that each appeared like the unextinguished snuff of a farthing candle, gleaming through the horn of a dark lantern: his nostrils were elevated in scorn, as if his sense of smelling had been perpetually offended by some unsavoury odour; and he looked as if he wanted to shrink within himself from the impertinence of society. He wore a black periwig, as straight as the pinions of a raven, and this covered with a hat flapped, and fastened to his head by a speckled handkerchief, tied under his chin. He was wrapped in a great coat of brown frize, under which he seemed to conceal a small bundle. His name was Ferret, and his character distinguished by three peculiarities: he was never seen to smile; he was never heard to speak in praise of any person whatsoever; and he was never known to give a direct answer to any question that was asked; but seemed, on all occasions, to be actuated by the most perverse spirit of contradiction.

Captain Crowe, having remarked that it was squally weather, asked how far it was to the next market-town; and, understanding that the distance was not less than six miles, said he had a good mind to come to an anchor for the night, if so be he could have a tolerable berth in this here harbour. Mr. Fillet, perceiving by his style that he was a seafaring gentleman, observed, that their landlady was not used to lodge such company; and expressed some surprise, that he, who had no doubt endured so many storms and hardships at sea, should think much of travelling five or six miles a horseback, by moonlight. 'For my part,' said he, 'I ride in all weathers, and at all hours, without minding cold, wet, wind, or darkness. My constitution is so case-hardened, that I believe I could live all the year at Spitzbergen. With respect to

this road, I know every foot of it so exactly, that I'll engage to travel forty miles upon it blindfold, without making one false step; and, if you have faith enough to put yourselves under my auspices, I will conduct you safe to an elegant inn, where you will meet with the best accommodation.'

'Thank you, brother,' replied the captain; 'we are much beholden to you for your courteous offer; but, howsoever, you must not think I mind foul weather more than my neighbours: I have worked hard aloft and a low in many a taught gale. But this here is the case, d'ye see; we have run down a long day's reckoning: our beasts have had a hard spell; and as for my own hap, brother, I doubt my bottom-planks have lost some of their sheathing, being as how I an't used to that kind of scrubbing.'

The doctor, who had practised on board a man-of-war in his youth, and was perfectly well acquainted with the captain's dialect, assured him, that, if his bottom was damaged, he would new-pay it with an excellent salve, which he always carried about him, to guard against such accidents on the road. But Tom Clarke, who seemed to have cast the eyes of affection upon the landlady's eldest daughter Dolly, objected to their proceeding farther without rest or refreshment, as they had already travelled fifty miles since morning: and he was sure his uncle must be fatigued both in mind and body, from vexation, as well as from hard exercise, to which he had not been accustomed. Fillet then desisted, saying, he was sorry to find the captain had any cause for vexation; but he hoped it was not an incurable evil. This expression was accompanied with a look of curiosity, which Mr. Clarke was glad of an occasion to gratify; for, as we have hinted above, he was a very communicative gentleman, and the affair which now lay upon his stomach interested him nearly. 'I'll assure you, sir,' said he, 'this here gentleman, captain Crowe, who is my mother's own brother, has been cruelly used by some of his relations. He bears as good a character as any captain of a ship on the Royal Exchange, and has under-

gone a variety of hardships at sea. What d'ye think, now, of his bursting all his sinews, and making his eyes start out of his head, in pulling his ship off a rock, whereby he saved to his owners——' Here he was interrupted by the captain, who exclaimed, 'Belay, Tom, belay! prithee don't veer out such a deal of jaw. Clap a stopper upon thy cable, and bring thyself up, my lad. What a deal of stuff thou hast pumped up, concerning bursting, and starting, and pulling ships! Lord have mercy on us! Look ye here, brother—look ye here: mind these poor crippled joints: two fingers on the starboard, and three on the larboard hand; crooked, d'ye see, like the knees of a bilander. I'll tell you what, brother, you seem to be a ship deep-laden, rich cargo, current setting into the bay, hard gale, lee-shore, all hands in the boat, tow round the headland,—self pulling for dear blood against the whole crew. Snap go the finger-braces; crack went eye-blocks; bounce day-light; flash star-light; down I foundered, dark as hell: whizz went my ears, and my head spun like a whirligig. That don't signify: I'm a Yorkshire boy, as the saying is: all my life at sea, brother, by reason of an old grandmother and maiden aunt, a couple of old stinking——; kept me these forty years out of my grandfather's estate. Hearing as how they had taken their departure, came a-shore, hired horses, and clapped on all my canvass, steering to the northward, to take possession of my——But it don't signify talking—these two old piratical—had held a palaver with a lawyer—an attorney, Tom, d'ye mind me, an attorney, and, by his assistance, hove me out of my inheritance: that is all, brother: hove me out of five hundred pounds a year—that's all: but what signifies? but such wind-falls we don't every day pick up along shore. Fill about, brother: yes, by the Lord, those two smuggling harri-dans, with the assistance of an attorney,—an attorney, Tom, hove me out of five hundred a year.'—'Yes, indeed, sir,' added Mr. Clarke; 'those two malicious old women docked the entail, and left the estate to an alien.'

Here Mr. Ferret thought proper to intermingle in the

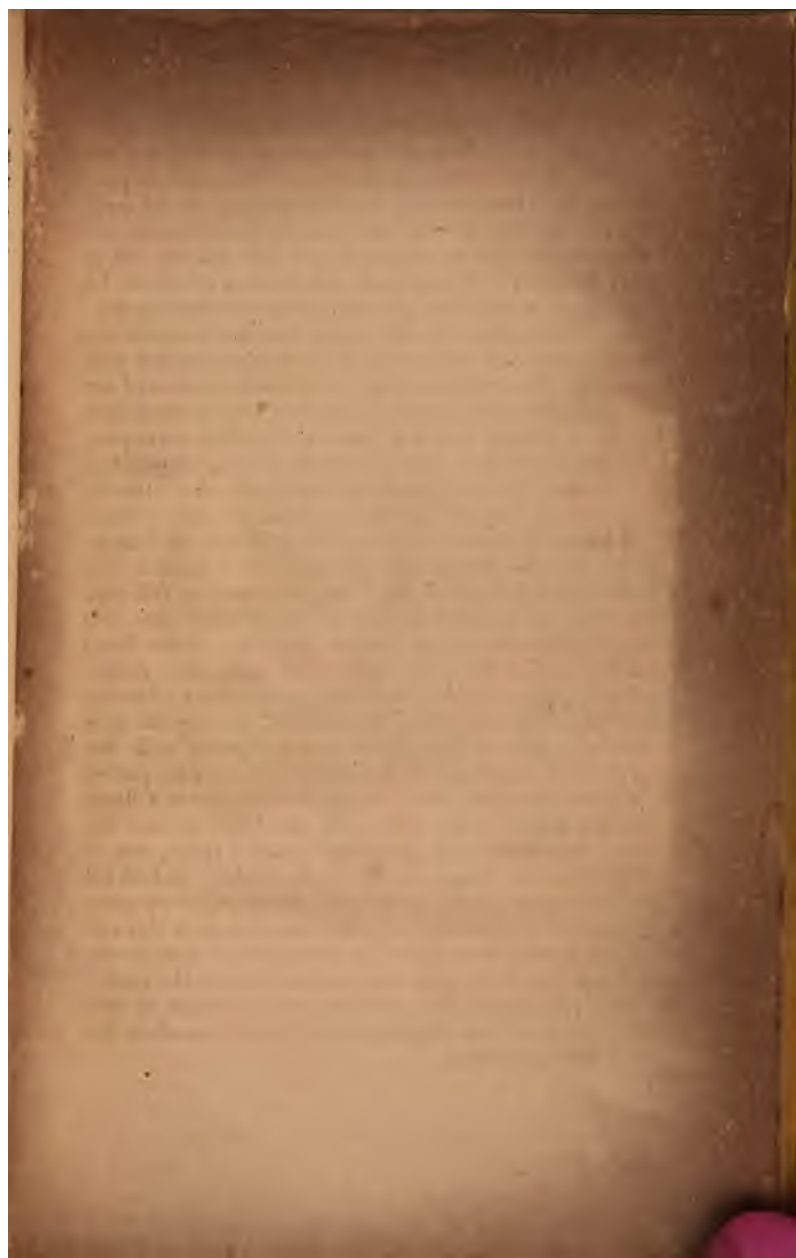
conversation with a 'Pish, what do'st talk of docking the entail? Do'st not know, that by the statute Westm. 2. 13. Ed. I. the will and intention of the donor must be fulfilled, and the tenant in tail shall not alien after the issue had, or before?'—'Give me leave, sir,' replied Tom; 'I presume you are a practitioner in the law. Now, you know, that in the case of a contingent remainder, the entail may be destroyed by levying a fine, and suffering a recovery; or otherwise destroying the particular estate, before the contingency happens. If feoffees, who possess an estate only during the life of a son, where divers remainders are limited over, make a feoffment in fee to him, by the feoffment all the future remainders are destroyed. Indeed, a person in remainder may have a writ of intrusion, if any do intrude, after the death of a tenant for life; and the writ *ex gravi querela* lies to execute a devise in remainder, after the death of a tenant in tail without issue.'—'Spoke like a true disciple of Geber,' cries Ferret. 'No, sir,' replied Mr. Clarke, 'counsellor Caper is in the conveyancing way: I was clerk to serjeant Croker.'—'Ay, now you may set up for yourself,' resumed the other; 'for you can prate as unintelligibly as the best of them.'

'Perhaps,' said Tom, 'I do not make myself understood: if so be as how that is the case, let us change the position; and suppose that this here case is a tail after a possibility of issue extinct. If a tenant in tail, after possibility, make a feoffment of his land, he, in reversion, may enter for the forfeiture. Then, we must make a distinction between general tail and special tail. It is the word body that makes the entail: there must be body in the tail, devised to heirs male or female, otherwise it is a fee-simple, because it is not limited of what body. Thus a corporation cannot be seized in tail. For example; here is a young woman—What is your name, my dear?'—'Dolly,' answered the daughter, with a curtsy. 'Here's Dolly; I seize Dolly in tail: Dolly, I seize you in tail.'—'Sha't then,' cried Dolly, pouting. 'I am seized of land in fee—I settle on Dolly in tail.' Dolly, who did not comprehend the nature of the illustration, un-

derstood him in a literal sense; and, in a whimpering tone, exclaimed, 'Sha't then, I tell thee, cursed toad!' Tom, however, was so transported with his subject, that he took no notice of poor Dolly's mistake; but proceeded in his harangue upon the different kinds of tails, remainders, and seisins, when he was interrupted by a noise, that alarmed the whole company. The rain had been succeeded by a storm of wind, that howled around the house with most savage impetuosity; and the heavens were overcast in such a manner, that not one star appeared; so that all without was darkness and uproar. This aggravated the horror of divers loud screams, which even the noise of the blast could not exclude from the astonished ears of our travellers. Captain Crowe called out, 'Avast avast:' Tom Clarke sat silent, staring wildly with his mouth still open: the surgeon himself seemed startled; and Ferret's countenance betrayed evident marks of confusion: the ostler moved nearer the chimney, and the good woman of the house, with her two daughters, crept close to the company.

After some pause, the captain starting up, 'These,' said he, 'be signals of distress. Some poor souls in danger of foundering. Let us bear up a-head, and see if we can give them any assistance.' The landlady begged him, for Christ's sake, not to think of going out; for it was a spirit, that would lead him astray into fens and rivers, and certainly do him a mischief. Crowe seemed to be staggered by this remonstrance, which his nephew reinforced, observing, that it might be a stratagem of rogues to decoy them into the fields, that they might rob them under cloud of night. Thus exhorted, he resumed his seat; and Mr. Ferret began to make very severe strictures upon the folly and fear of those who believed and trembled at the visitation of spirits, ghosts, and goblins: he said, he would engage, with twelve penny worth of phosphorus, to frighten a whole parish out of their senses: then he expatiated on the pusillanimity of the nation in general; ridiculed the militia, censured the government, and dropped some hints about a change of hands, which the captain could not, and the doctor would not comprehend. Tom Clarke,

from the freedom of his discourse, concluded he was a ministerial spy, and communicated his opinion to his uncle in a whisper, while this misanthrope continued to pour forth his invectives with a fluency peculiar to himself. The truth is, Mr. Ferret had been a party-writer, not from principle, but employment, and had felt the rod of power; in order to avoid a second exertion of which, he now found it convenient to sculk about in the country: for he had received intimation of a warrant from the secretary of state, who wanted to be better acquainted with his person. Notwithstanding the ticklish nature of his situation, it was become so habitual to him to think and speak in a certain manner, that, even before strangers, whose principles and connections he could not possibly know, he hardly ever opened his mouth without uttering some direct or implied sarcasm against the government. He had already proceeded a considerable way in demonstrating, that the nation was bankrupt and beggared, and that those who stood at the helm were steering full into the gulf of inevitable destruction; when his lecture was suddenly suspended, by a violent knocking at the door, which threatened the whole house with immediate demolition. Captain Crowe, believing they should be instantly boarded, unsheathed his hanger, and stood in a posture of defence: Mr. Fillet armed himself with the poker, which happened to be red-hot: the ostler pulled down a rusty firelock, that hung by the roof, over a sitch of bacon: Tom Clarke, perceiving the landlady and her children distracted with terror, conducted them, out of mere compassion, below stairs into the cellar; and as for Mr. Ferret, he prudently withdrew into an adjoining pantry. But as a personage of great importance in this entertaining history was forced to remain some time at the door, before he could gain admittance, so must the reader wait with patience for the next chapter, in which he will see the cause of this disturbance explained, much to his comfort and edification.

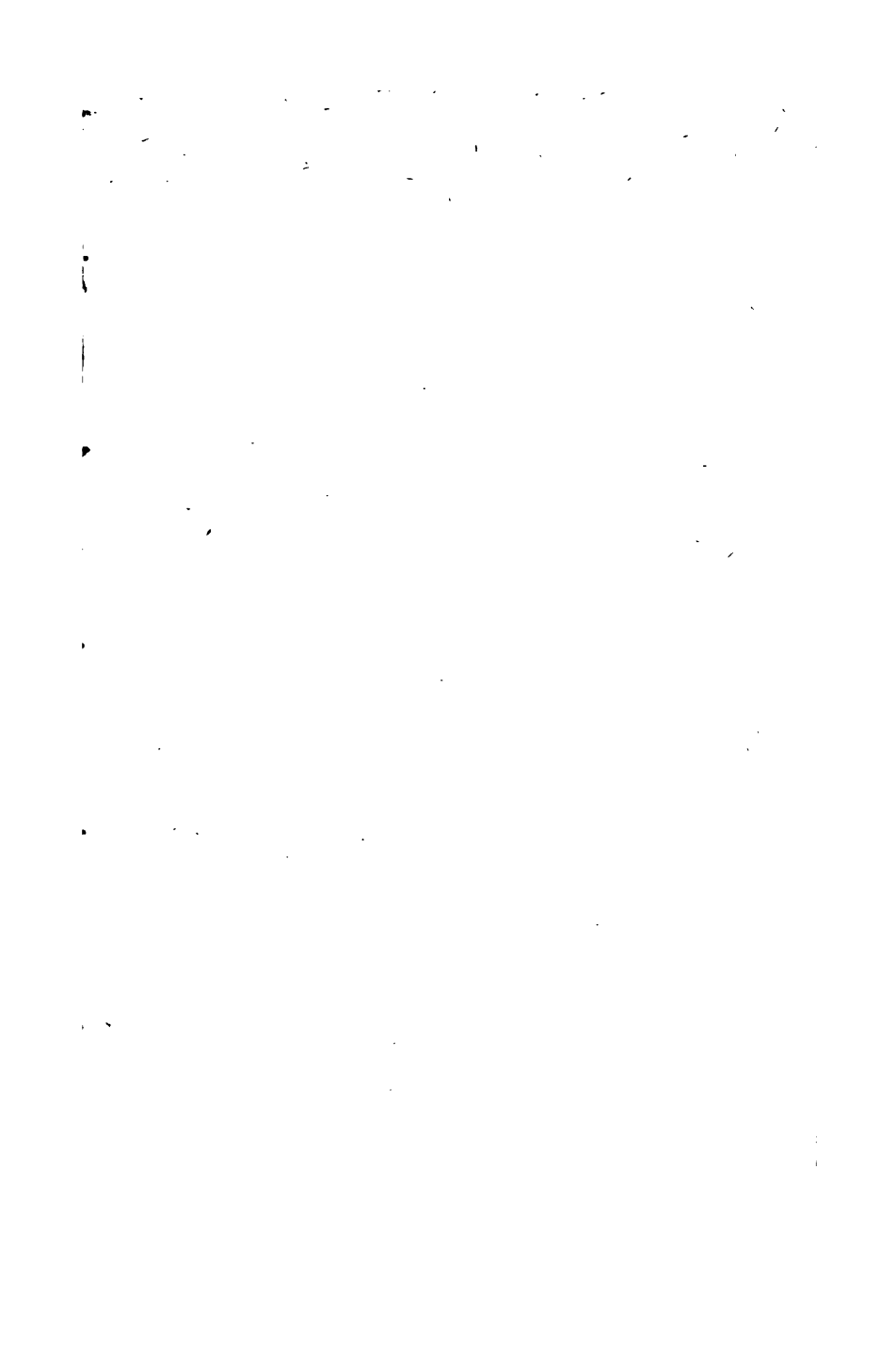






*The Alarm of Crowe & Fiddel at  
the appearance of Sir Launcelot.*

*London, Printed for James Cochrane & Co. 1832.*



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CHAP. II.—In which the hero of these adventures makes his first appearance on the stage of action.

The outward door of the Black Lion had already sustained two dreadful shocks ; but at the third it flew open, and in stalked an apparition, that smote the hearts of our travellers with fear and trepidation. It was the figure of a man armed cap-a-pee, bearing on his shoulder a bundle dropping with water, which afterwards appeared to be the body of a man that seemed to have been drowned, and fished up from the bottom of the neighbouring river. Having deposited his burden carefully on the floor, he addressed himself to the company in these words : ‘ Be not surprised, good people, at this unusual appearance, which I shall take an opportunity to explain ; and forgive the rude and boisterous manner in which I have demanded, and indeed forced admittance : the violence of my intrusion was the effect of necessity. In crossing the river, my squire and his horse were swept away by the stream ; and, with some difficulty, I have been able to drag him ashore, though I am afraid my assistance reached him too late ; for, since I brought him to land, he has given no signs of life.’ Here he was interrupted by a groan, which issued from the chest of the squire, and terrified the spectators as much as it comforted the master. After some recollection, Mr. Fillet began to undress the body, which was laid in a blanket on the floor, and rolled from side to side by his direction. A considerable quantity of water being discharged from the mouth of this unfortunate squire, he uttered a hideous roar, and, opening his eyes, stared wildly around : then the surgeon undertook for his recovery ; and his master went forth with the ostler in quest of the horses, which he had left by the side of the river. His back was no sooner turned, than Ferret, who had been peeping from behind the pantry-door, ventured to rejoin the company ; pronouncing with a smile, or rather grin of contempt, ‘ Hey day ! what precious mummery is this ? What, are we to have the farce of Hamlet’s ghost ?’—‘ Adzooks !’ cried the captain, ‘ my

kinsman Tom has dropped astern : hope in God a-has not bulged to, and gone to bottom.'—' Pish !' exclaimed the misanthrope : ' there's no danger ; the young lawyer is only seizing Dolly in tail.'

Certain it is, Dolly squeaked at that instant in the cellar ; and Clarke, appearing soon after in some confusion, declared she had been frightened by a flash of lightning : but this assertion was not confirmed by the young lady herself, who eyed him with a sullen regard, indicating displeasure, though not indifference ; and when questioned by her mother, replied, ' Adoan't maidn what a-says, so a doan't, vor all his goalden jacket there.'

In the mean time, the surgeon had performed the operation of phlebotomy on the squire, who was lifted into a chair, and supported by the landlady for that purpose ; but he had not, as yet, given any sign of having retrieved the use of his senses. And here Mr. Fillet could not help contemplating, with surprise, the strange figure and accoutrements of his patient, who seemed in age to be turned of fifty. His stature was below the middle size : he was thick, squat, and brawny, with a small protuberance on one shoulder, and a prominent belly, which, in consequence of the water he had swallowed, now strutted out beyond its usual dimensions. His forehead was remarkably convex, and so very low, that his black bushy hair descended within an inch of his nose : but this did not conceal the wrinkles of his front, which were manifold. His small glimmering eyes resembled those of the Hampshire porker, that turns up the soil with his projecting snout. His cheeks were shrivelled and puckered at the corners, like the seams of a regimental coat, as it comes from the hands of the contractor ; his nose bore a strong analogy in shape to a tennis-ball, and in colour to a mulberry ; for all the water of the river had not been able to quench the natural fire of that feature. His upper jaw was furnished with two long white sharp-pointed teeth or fangs, such as the reader may have observed in the chaps of a wolf, or full-grown mastiff, and an anatomist would describe as a preternatural elongation of the *dentes canini*. His chin was so long, so peaked, and so incur-

vated, as to form, in profile with his impending forehead, the exact resemblance of a moon in the first quarter. With respect to his equipage, he had a leathern cap upon his head, faced like those worn by the marines, and exhibiting in embroidery the figure of a crescent. His coat was of white cloth, faced with black, and cut in a very antique fashion: and, in lieu of a waistcoat, he wore a buff jerkin. His feet were cased in loose buskins, which, though they rose almost to his knee, could not hide that curvature, known by the appellation of bandy-legs. A large string of bandaliers garnished a broad belt that graced his shoulders, from whence depended an instrument of war, which was something between a back-sword and a cutlass; and a case of pistols was stuck in his girdle. Such was the figure which the whole company now surveyed with admiration. After some pause, he seemed to recover his recollection. He rolled his eyes around, and, attentively surveying every individual, exclaimed, in a strange tone, 'Bodikins! where's Gilbert?' This interrogation did not savour much of sanity, especially when accompanied with a wild stare, which is generally interpreted as a sure sign of a disturbed understanding: nevertheless, the surgeon endeavoured to assist his recollection. 'Come,' said he, 'have a good heart. How do'st do, friend?'—'Do?' replied the squire; 'do as well as I can: that's a lie too: I might have done better; I had no business to be here.'—'You ought to thank God and your master,' resumed the surgeon, 'for the providential escape you have had.'—'Thank my master?' cried the squire: 'thank the devil! Go, and teach your grannum to crack filberds. I know who I am bound to pray for, and who I ought to curse the longest day I have to live.'

Here the captain interposing, 'Nay, brother,' said he, 'you are bound to pray for this here gentleman as your sheet-anchor; for, if so be as he had not cleared your stowage of the water you had taken in at your upper-works, and lightened your veins, d'ye see, by taking away some of your blood, adad! you had driven before the gale, and never been brought up in this world again,

d'ye see.'—'What, then, you would persuade me,' replied the patient, 'that the only way to save my life was to shed my precious blood? Look ye, friend, it shall not be lost blood to me. I take you all to witness, that that there surgeon, or apothecary, or farrier, or dog-doctor, or whatsoever he may be, has robbed me of the balsam of life; he has not left so much blood in my body as would fatten a starved flea. O, that there was a lawyer here to serve him with a siserari!' Then fixing his eyes upon Ferret, he proceeded, 'An't you a limb of the law, friend? No, I cry you mercy, you look more like a show-man or a conjuror.' Ferret, nettled at this address, answered, 'It would be well for you that I could conjure a little common sense into that numscull of yours.'—'If I want that commodity,' rejoined the squire, 'I must go to another market, I trow. You legerdemain men be more like to conjure the money from our pockets, than sense into our skulls. Vor my own part, I was once cheated of vorty good shillings by one of your broother cups-and-balls.' In all probability, he would have descended to particulars, had not he been seized with a return of his nausea, which obliged him to call for a bumper of brandy. This remedy being swallowed, the tumult in his stomach subsided: he desired he might be put to bed without delay, and that half a dozen eggs and a pound of bacon might, in a couple of hours, be dressed for his supper.

He was accordingly led off the scene by the landlady and her daughter; and Mr. Ferret had just time to observe the fellow was a composition, in which he did not know whether knave or fool most predominated, when the master returned from the stable. He had taken off his helmet, and now displayed a very engaging countenance. His age did not seem to exceed thirty: he was tall, and seemingly robust; his face long and oval, his nose aquiline, his mouth furnished with a set of elegant teeth, white as the drifted snow; his complexion clear, and his aspect noble. His chestnut hair loosely flowed in short natural curls; and his gray eyes shone with such vivacity, as plainly showed that his reason was a little

discomposed. Such an appearance prepossessed the greater part of the company in his favour : he bowed round with the most polite and affable address ; inquired about his squire ; and, being informed of the pains Mr. Fillet had taken for his recovery, insisted upon the gentleman's accepting a handsome gratuity : then, in consideration of the cold bath he had undergone, he was prevailed upon to take the post of honour, namely, the great chair fronting the fire, which was reinforced with a billet of wood for his comfort and convenience.

Perceiving his fellow-travellers either overawed into silence by his presence, or struck dumb with admiration at his equipage, he accosted them in these words, while an agreeable smile dimpled on his cheek :—

‘The good company wonders, no doubt, to see a man cased in armour, such as has been for above a whole century disused in this and every other country of Europe ; and perhaps they will be still more surprised, when they hear that man profess himself a novice of that military order, which has of old been distinguished in Great Britain, as well as through all Christendom, by the name of knights-errant. Yes, gentlemen, in that painful and thorny path of toil and danger I have begun my career, a candidate for honest fame ; determined, as far as in me lies, to honour and assert the efforts of virtue ; to combat vice in all her forms, redress injuries, chastise oppression, protect the helpless and forlorn, relieve the indigent, exert my best endeavours in the cause of innocence and beauty, and dedicate my talents, such as they are, to the service of my country.’—‘What !’ said Ferret, ‘you set up for a modern Don Quixote ? The scheme is rather too stale and extravagant. What was a humorous romance, and well-timed satire in Spain, near two hundred years ago, will make but a sorry jest, and appear equally insipid and absurd, when really acted from affectation, at this time o’day, in a country like England.’

The knight, eyeing this censor with a look of disdain, replied, in a solemn, lofty tone, ‘He that from affectation



imitates the extravagances recorded of Don Quixote, is an impostor equally wicked and contemptible: he that counterfeits madness, unless he dissemble, like the elder Brutus, for some virtuous purpose, not only debases his own soul, but acts as a traitor to Heaven, by denying the divinity that is within him. I am neither an affected imitator of Don Quixote, nor, as I trust in Heaven, visited by that spirit of lunacy so admirably displayed in the fictitious character exhibited by the inimitable Cervantes. I have not yet encountered a windmill for a giant; nor mistaken this public house for a magnificent castle: neither do I believe this gentleman to be the constable; nor that worthy practitioner to be the master Elizabat, the surgeon recorded in *Amadis de Gaul*; nor you to be the enchanter Alquife, nor any other sage of history or romance. I see and distinguish objects as they are discerned and described by other men: I reason without prejudice, can endure contradiction, and, as the company perceives, even bear impertinent censure without passion or resentment: I quarrel with none but the foes of virtue and decorum, against whom I have declared perpetual war, and them I will every where attack as the natural enemies of mankind.'—'But that war,' said the cynic, 'may soon be brought to a conclusion, and your adventures close in Bridewell, provided you meet with some determined constable, who will seize your worship as a vagrant, according to the statute.'—'Heaven and earth!' cried the stranger, starting up, and laying his hand to his sword, 'do I live to hear myself insulted with such an opprobrious epithet, and refrain from trampling into dust the insolent calumniator?'

The tone in which these words were pronounced, and the indignation that flashed from the eyes of the speaker, intimidated every individual of the society, and reduced Ferret to a temporary privation of all his faculties. His eyes retired within their sockets; his complexion, which was naturally of a copper hue, now shifted to a leaden colour; his teeth began to chatter; and all his limbs were agitated by a sudden palsy. The knight observed

his condition, and resumed his seat, saying, 'I was to blame: my vengeance must be reserved for very different objects. Friend, you have nothing to fear: the sudden gust of passion is now blown over. Recollect yourself, and I will reason calmly on the observation you have made.'

This was a very seasonable declaration to Mr. Ferret, who opened his eyes; and wiped his forehead, while the other proceeded in these terms: 'You say I am in danger of being apprehended as a vagrant: I am not so ignorant of the laws of my country, but that I know the description of those who fall within the legal meaning of this odious term. You must give me leave to inform you, friend, that I am neither bearward, fencer, stroller, gipsy, mountebank, nor mendicant, nor do I practise subtile craft to deceive and impose upon the king's lieges; nor can I be held as an idle, disorderly person, travelling from place to place, collecting monies by virtue of counterfeited passes, briefs, and other false pretences. In what respect therefore am I to be deemed a vagrant? Answer boldly, without fear or scruple.' To this interrogation the misanthrope replied, with a faltering accent, 'If not a vagrant, you incur the penalty for riding armed in affray of the peace.'—'But instead of riding armed in affray of the peace,' resumed the other, 'I ride in preservation of the peace; and gentlemen are allowed by the law to wear armour for their defence. Some ride with blunderbusses, some with pistols, some with swords, according to their various inclinations: mine is to wear the armour of my forefathers: perhaps I use them for exercise, in order to accustom myself to fatigue, and strengthen my constitution; perhaps I assume them for a frolic.'

'But if you swagger armed and in disguise, assault me on the highway, or put me in bodily fear, for the sake of the jest, the law will punish you in earnest,' cried the other. 'But my intention,' answered the knight, 'is carefully to avoid all those occasions of offence.'—'Then,' said Ferret, 'you may go unarmed, like other

sober people.'—'Not so,' answered the knight: 'as I propose to travel at all times, and in all places, mine armour may guard me against the attempts of treachery: it may defend me in combat against odds, should I be assaulted by a multitude of plebeians, or have occasion to bring malefactors to justice.'—'What, then,' exclaimed the philosopher, 'you intend to co-operate with the honourable fraternity of thief-takers?'—'I do purpose,' said the youth, eyeing him with a look of ineffable contempt, 'to act as a coadjutor to the law, and even to remedy evils which the law cannot reach; to detect fraud and treason, abase insolence, mortify pride, discourage slander, disgrace immodesty, and stigmatize ingratitude: but the infamous part of a thief-catcher's character I disclaim. I neither associate with robbers and pickpockets, knowing them to be such, that, in being entrusted with their secrets, I may more effectually betray them; nor shall I ever pocket the reward granted by the legislature to those by whom robbers are brought to conviction: but I shall always think it my duty to rid my country of that pernicious vermin, which prey upon the bowels of the commonwealth: not but that an incorporated company of licensed thieves might, under proper regulations, be of service to the community.'

Ferret, emboldened by the passive tameness with which the stranger bore his last reflection, began to think he had nothing of Hector but his outside, and gave a loose to all the acrimony of his party rancour. Hearing the knight mention a company of licensed thieves, 'What else,' cried he, 'is the majority of the nation? What is your standing army at home, that eat up their fellow subjects? What are your mercenaries abroad, whom you hire to fight their own quarrels? What is your militia, that wise measure of this sagacious ministry, but a larger gang of petty thieves, who steal sheep and poultry through mere idleness; and, were they confronted with an enemy, would steal themselves away? What is your—— but a knot of thieves, who pillage the nation under colour of law, and enrich themselves with the wreck of their

country? When you consider the enormous debt of a hundred millions, the intolerable load of taxes and impositions under which we groan, and the manner in which that burden is yearly accumulating, to support two German electors, without our receiving any thing in return but the shows of triumph and shadows of conquest: I say, when you reflect on these circumstances, and, at the same time, behold our cities filled with bankrupts, and our country with beggars; can you be so infatuated as to deny that our ministry is mad, or worse than mad; our wealth exhausted, our people miserable, our credit blasted, and our state on the brink of perdition? This prospect, indeed, will make the fainter impression, if we recollect that we ourselves are a pack of such profligate, corrupted, pusillanimous rascals, as deserve no salvation.'

The stranger, raising his voice to a loud tone, replied, 'Such, indeed, are the insinuations, equally false and insidious, with which the desperate emissaries of a party endeavour to poison the minds of his majesty's subjects, in defiance of common honesty and common sense. But he must be blind to all perception, and dead to candour, who does not see and own that we are involved in a just and necessary war, which has been maintained on truly British principles, prosecuted with vigour, and crowned with success; that our taxes are easy in proportion to our wealth; that our conquests are equally glorious and immortal; that our commerce flourishes, our people are happy, and our enemies reduced to despair. Is there a man, who boasts a British heart, that repines at the success and prosperity of his country? Such there are, O shame to patriotism, and reproach to Great Britain! who act as the emissaries of France both in word and writing; who exaggerate our necessary burdens, magnify our dangers, extol the power of our enemies, deride our victories, extenuate our conquests, condemn the measures of our government, and scatter the seeds of dissatisfaction through the land. Such domestic traitors are doubly the objects of detestation; first, in perverting truth; and, secondly, in propagating falsehood, to the pre-

judice of that community, of which they have professed themselves members. One of these is well known by the name of Ferret, an old, rancorous, incorrigible instrument of sedition : happy it is for him, that he has never fallen in my way ; for, notwithstanding the maxims of forbearance which I have adopted, the indignation which the character of that caitiff inspires, would probably impel me to some act of violence, and I should crush him like an ungrateful viper, that gnawed the bosom which warmed it into life !

These last words were pronounced with a wildness of look, that even bordered on frenzy. The misanthrope once more retired to the pantry for shelter, and the rest of the guests were evidently disconcerted.

Mr. Fillet, in order to change the conversation, which was likely to produce serious consequences, expressed uncommon satisfaction at the remarks which the knight had made ; signified his approbation of the honourable office he had undertaken ; declared himself happy in having seen such an accomplished cavalier ; and observed, that nothing was wanting to render him a complete knight-errant, but some celebrated beauty, the mistress of his heart, whose idea might animate his breast, and strengthen his arm to the utmost exertion of valour : he added, that love was the soul of chivalry. The stranger started at this discourse : he turned his eyes on the surgeon with a fixed regard ; his countenance changed ; a torrent of tears gushed down his cheek ; his head sunk upon his bosom ; he heaved a profound sigh, and remained in silence, with all the external marks of unutterable sorrow. The company were, in some measure, affected by his despondence ; concerning the cause of which, however, they would not venture to inquire.

By this time the landlady, having disposed of the squire, desired to know, with many curtsies, if his honour would not choose to put off his wet garments ; assuring him that she had a very good feather bed at his service, upon which many gentlefolks of the first quality had lain ; that the sheets were well aired ; and that Dolly should warm them for his worship with a pan of coals.

This hospitable offer being repeated, he seemed to wake from a trance of grief, arose from his seat, and, bowing courteously to the company, withdrew.

Captain Crowe, whose faculty of speech had been all this time absorbed in amazement, now broke into the conversation with a volley of interjections: 'Split my snatch-block!—Od's firkin!—Splice my old shoes!—I have sailed the salt seas, brother, since I was no higher than the Triton's taffrel—east, west, north, and south, as the saying is—Blacks, Indians, Moors, Morattos, and Seapoys! but, smite my timbers! such a man of war——' Here he was interrupted by his nephew Tom Clarke, who had disappeared at the knight's first entrance, and now produced himself with an eagerness in his look, while the tears started in his eyes. 'Lord bless my soul!' cried he, 'I know that gentleman and his servant, as well as I know my own father. I am his own godson, uncle: he stood for me when he was a boy; yes, indeed, sir, my father was steward to the estate. I may say I was bred up in the family of sir Everhard Greaves, who has been dead these two years: this is the only son, sir Launcelot; the best-natured, worthy, generous gentleman—I care not who knows it: I love him as well as if he was my own flesh and blood.'

At this period, Tom, whose heart was of the melting mood, began to sob and weep plenteously, from pure affection. Crowe, who was not very subject to these tendernesses, d——d him for a chicken-hearted lubber; repeating, with much peevishness, 'What dost cry for? what dost cry for, noddy?' The surgeon, impatient to know the story of sir Launcelot, which he had heard imperfectly recounted, begged that Mr. Clarke would compose himself, and relate it as circumstantially as his memory could retain the particulars; and Tom, wiping his eyes, promised to give him that satisfaction; which the reader, if he be so minded, may partake of in the next chapter.



CHAP. III.—Which the reader, on perusal, may wish were chapter the last.

The doctor prescribed a *repetatur* of the julep, and mixed the ingredients *secundum artem*. Tom Clarke hemmed thrice to clear his pipes; while the rest of the company, including Dolly and her mother, who had by this time administered to the knight, composed themselves into earnest and hushed attention. Then the young lawyer began his narration to this effect: 'I tell you what, gentlemen, I don't pretend in this here case to flourish and harangue like a—having never been called to—but what of that, d'ye see? perhaps I may know as much as——Facts are facts, as the saying is; I shall tell, repeat, and relate a plain story, matters of fact, d'ye see, without rhetoric, oratory, ornament, or embellishment; without repetition, tautology, circumlocution, or going about the bush: facts, which I shall aver, partly on the testimony of my own knowledge, and partly from the information of responsible evidences of good repute and credit, any circumstance known to the contrary notwithstanding: for as the law saith, if so be as how there is an exception to evidence, that exception is in its nature but a denial of what is taken to be good by the other party, and *exceptio in non exceptis firmat regulam*, d'ye see. But, howsomever, in regard to this here affair, we need not be so scrupulous as if we were pleading before a judge *sedente curia*.'

Ferret, whose curiosity was rather more eager than that of any other person in this audience, being provoked by this preamble, dashed the pipe he had just filled in pieces against the grate; and after having pronounced the interjection pish, with an acrimony of aspect altogether peculiar to himself, 'If,' said he, 'impertinence and folly were felony by the statute, there would be no want of unexceptionable evidence to hang such an eternal babbler.'—'Anan, babbler!' cried Tom, reddening with passion, and starting up; 'I'd have you to know, sir, that I can bite as well as babble; and that, if I am so minded, I can run upon the foot after my game, without being in

fault, as the saying is; and, which is more, I can shake an old fox by the collar.'

How far this young lawyer might have proceeded to prove himself staunch on the person of the misanthrope, if he had not been prevented, we shall not determine; but the whole company were alarmed at his looks and expressions. Dolly's rosy cheeks assumed an ash colour, while she ran between the disputants, crying, 'Naay, naay, vor the love of God, doan't then, doan't then!' But Captain Crowe exerted a paternal authority over his nephew, saying, 'Avast, Tom, avast! Snug's the word: we'll have no boarding, d'ye see. Haul forward thy chair again, take thy berth, and proceed with the story in a direct course, without yawing like a Dutch yanky.'

Tom, thus tutored, recollected himself, resumed his seat, and, after some pause, plunged at once into the current of narration. 'I told you before, gemmen, that the gentleman in armour was the only son of sir Everhard Greaves, who possessed a free estate of five thousand a year in our country, and was respected by all his neighbours, as much for his personal merit as for his family fortune. With respect to his son Launcelot, whom you have seen, I can remember nothing until he returned from the university, about the age of seventeen, and then I myself was not more than ten years old. The young gemman was at that time in mourning for his mother; though, God he knows, sir Everhard had more cause to rejoice than to be afflicted at her death; for, among friends, here he lowered his voice, and looked round the kitchen, 'she was very whimsical, expensive, and ill-tempered, and, I'm afraid, a little—upon the—flighty order—a little touched or so; but mum for that, the lady is now dead; and it is my maxim, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*. The young squire was even then very handsome, and looked remarkably well in his weepers; but he had an awkward air and shambling gait, stooped mortally, and was so shy and silent, that he would not look a stranger in the face, nor open his mouth before company. Whenever he spied a horse or carriage at the gate, he would make his escape into the garden, and from thence into the park: where



many's the good time and often he has been found sitting under a tree, with a book in his hand, reading Greek, Latin, and other foreign linguas.

' Sir Everhard himself was no great scholar, and my father had forgotten his classical learning; and so the rector of the parish was desired to examine young Launcelot. It was a long time before he found an opportunity: the squire always gave him the slip. At length the parson caught him in bed of a morning, and, locking the door, to it they went tooth and nail. What passed betwixt them, the Lord in heaven knows; but, when the doctor came forth, he looked wild and haggard as if he had seen a ghost, his face as white as paper, and his lips trembling like an aspen-leaf. Parson, said the knight, what is the matter? how dost find my son? I hope he won't turn out a ninny, and disgrace his family. The doctor, wiping the sweat from his forehead, replied, with some hesitation, he could not tell; he hoped the best; the squire was, to be sure, a very extraordinary young gentleman: but the father urging him to give an explicit answer, he frankly declared, That, in his opinion, the son would turn out either a mirror of wisdom, or a monument of folly; for his genius and disposition were altogether preternatural. The knight was sorely vexed at this declaration, and signified his displeasure, by saying, The doctor, like a true priest, dealt in mysteries and oracles, that would admit of different, and, indeed, contrary interpretations. He afterwards consulted my father, who had served as steward upon the estate for above thirty years, and acquired a considerable share of his favour. Will Clarke, said he, with tears in his eyes, what shall I do with this unfortunate lad? I would to God he had never been born; for I fear he will bring my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. When I am gone, he will throw away the estate, and bring himself to infamy and ruin, by keeping company with rooks and beggars. O Will! I could forgive extravagance in a young man; but it breaks my heart, to see my only son give such repeated proofs of a mean spirit, and sordid disposition!

' Here the old gentleman shed a flood of tears, and not

without some shadow of reason. By this time, Launce-  
lot was grown so reserved to his father, that he seldom  
saw him, or any of his relations, except when he was in  
a manner forced to appear at table, and there his bash-  
fulness seemed every day to increase. On the other hand,  
he had formed some very strange connexions. Every  
morning he visited the stable, where he not only con-  
versed with the grooms and helpers, but scraped acquaint-  
ance with the horses: he fed his favourites with his own  
hand, stroked, caressed, and rode them by turns; till at  
last they grew so familiar, that, even when they were a-  
field at grass, and saw him at a distance, they would toss  
their manes, whinny like so many colts at sight of the  
dam, and, galloping up to the place where he stood, smell  
him all over. You must know, that I myself, though a  
child, was his companion in all these excursions. He  
took a liking to me on account of my being his godson;  
and gave me more money than I knew what to do with.  
He had always plenty of cash for the asking, as my  
father was ordered to supply him liberally; the knight  
thinking that a command of money might help to raise  
his thoughts to a proper consideration of his own import-  
ance. He never could endure a common beggar, that  
was not either in a state of infancy or of old age; but in  
other respects, he made the guineas fly in such a manner,  
as looked more like madness than generosity. He had  
no communication with your rich yeomen; but rather  
treated them and their families with studied contempt,  
because, forsooth, they pretended to assume the dress and  
manners of the gentry: they kept their footmen, their  
saddle-horses, and chaises: their wives and daughters  
appeared in their jewels, their silks and their satins,  
their negligees and trolepees: their clumsy shanks, like  
so many shins of beef, were cased in silk hose and em-  
broidered slippers: their raw red fingers, gross as the  
pipes of a chamber-organ, which had been employed in  
milking the cows, in twirling the mop or churn-staff, be-  
ing adorned with diamonds, were taught to thrum the  
pandola, and even to touch the keys of the harpsichord:  
nay, in every village they kept a rout, and set up an as-

sembly; and in one place a hog-butcher was master of the ceremonies. I have heard Mr. Greaves ridicule them for their vanity and awkward imitation; and therefore, I believe, he avoided all concerns with them, even when they endeavoured to engage his attention. It was the lower sort of people with whom he chiefly conversed, such as ploughmen, ditchers, and other day-labourers. To every cottager in the parish he was a bounteous benefactor. He was, in the literal sense of the word, a careful overseer of the poor; for he went from house to house, industriously inquiring into the distresses of the people. He repaired their huts, clothed their backs, filled their bellies, and supplied them with necessaries for exercising their industry and different occupations.

‘I’ll give you one instance, now, as a specimen of his character. He and I, strolling one day on the side of a common, saw two boys picking hips and haws from the hedges: one seemed to be about five, and the other a year older: they were both barefoot and ragged, but at the same time fat, fair, and in good condition. Who do you belong to? said Mr. Greaves. To Mary Stile, replied the oldest, the widow that rents one of these housen.—And how dost live, my boy? thou lookest fresh and jolly, resumed the squire. Lived well enough till yesterday, answered the child. And, pray, what happened yesterday, my boy? continued Mr. Greaves. Happened? said he; why, mammy had a couple of little Welch keawes, that gi’en milk enough to fill all our bellies—mammy’s and mine, and Dick’s here, and my two sisters at hoam: yesterday the squire seized the keawes for rent, God rot ’un! Mammy’s gone to bed sick and sulky; my two sisters be crying at hoam vor vood; and Dick and I be come hither to pick haws and bullice. My godfather’s face grew red as scarlet: he took one of the children in either hand, and, leading them towards the house, found Sir Everhard talking with my father before the gate. Instead of avoiding the old gentleman, as usual, he brushed up to him with a spirit he had never shown before, and presenting the two ragged haws, Surely, sir, said he, you will not countenance

that there ruffian, your steward, in oppressing the widow and the fatherless! On pretence of distraining for the rent of a cottage, he has robbed the mother of these and other poor infant orphans of two cows, which afforded them their whole sustenance. Shall you be concerned in tearing the hard-earned morsel from the mouth of indigence? Shall your name, which has been so long mentioned as a blessing, be now detested as a curse by the poor, the helpless, and forlorn? The father of these babes was once your gamekeeper, who died of a consumption caught in your service: you see they are almost naked; I found them plucking haws and sloes, in order to appease their hunger! The wretched mother is starving in a cold cottage, distracted with the cries of two other infants, clamorous for food; and, while her heart is bursting with anguish and despair, she invokes Heaven to avenge the widow's cause upon the head of her unrelenting landlord.

'This unexpected address brought tears into the eyes of the good old gentleman. Will Clarke, said he to my father, how durst you abuse my authority at this rate? you, who know I have been always a protector, not an oppressor, of the needy and unfortunate. I charge you, go immediately and comfort this poor woman with immediate relief: instead of her own cows, let her have two of the best milch cows of my dairy; they shall graze in my parks in summer, and be foddered with my hay in winter: she shall sit rent-free for life; and I will take care of these poor orphans. This was a very affecting scene. Mr. Launcelot took his father's hand and kissed it, while the tears ran down his cheeks; and sir Everhard embraced his son with great tenderness, crying, My dear boy, God be praised for having given you such a feeling heart. My father himself was moved, tho' a practitioner of the law, and consequently used to distresses. He declared, that he had given no directions to distrain; and that the bailiff must have done it by his own authority. If that be the case, said the young squire, let the inhuman rascal be turned out of our service.

‘Well, gemmen, all the children were immediately clothed and fed, and the poor widow had well-nigh run distracted for joy. The old knight, being of a humane temper himself, was pleased to see such proofs of his son’s generosity: he was not angry at his spending his money, but at squandering away his time among the dregs of the people; for you must know, he not only made matches, portioned poor maidens, and set up young couples that had come together without money; but he mingled in every rustic diversion, and bore away the prize in every contest. He excelled every swain of that district in feats of strength and activity; in leaping, running, wrestling, cricket, cudgel-playing, and pitching the bar; and was confessed to be, out of sight, the best dancer at all wakes and holidays. Happy was the country girl who could engage the young squire as her partner! To be sure, it was a comely sight for to see as how the buxom country lasses, fresh and fragrant, and blushing like the rose, in their best apparel dight, their white hose, and clean short dimity petticoats, their gaudy gowns of printed cotton, their topknots, kissing-strings, and stomachers, bedizened with bunches of ribands of various colours, green, pink, and yellow; to see them crowned with garlands, and assembled on May-day, to dance before squire Launcelot, as he made his morning progress through the village. Then all the young peasants made their appearance with cockades, suited to the fancies of their several sweethearts, and boughs of flowering hawthorn: the children sported about like flocks of frisking lambs, or the young fry swarming under the sunny bank of some meandering river: the old men and women, in their holiday garments, stood at their doors to receive their benefactor, and poured forth blessings on him as he passed: the children welcomed him with their shrill shouts, the damsels with songs of praise; and the young men, with the pipe and tabor, marched before him to the maypole, which was bedecked with flowers and bloom. There the rural dance began: a plentiful dinner, with oceans of good liquor, was bespoken at the White Hart; the whole village was regaled at the

squire's expense ; and both the day and the night was spent in mirth and pleasure. Lord help you ! he could not rest if he thought there was an aching heart in the whole parish. Every paltry cottage was in a little time converted into a pretty, snug, comfortable habitation, with a wooden porch at the door, glass casements in the windows, and a little garden behind, well stored with greens, roots, and salads : in a word, the poor's rate was reduced to a mere trifle ; and one would have thought the golden age was revived in Yorkshire. But, as I told you before, the old knight could not bear to see his only son so wholly attached to these lowly pleasures, while he industriously shunned all opportunities of appearing in that superior sphere, to which he was designed by nature and by fortune : he imputed his conduct to meanness of spirit, and advised with my father touching the properest expedient to wean his affections from such low-born pursuits. My father counselled him to send the young gentleman up to London, to be entered as a student in the Temple, and recommended him to the superintendence of some person who knew the town, and might engage him insensibly in such amusements and connexions, as would soon lift his ideas above the humble objects on which they had been hitherto employed. This advice appeared so salutary, that it was followed without the least hesitation. The young squire himself was perfectly well satisfied with the proposal ; and, in a few days, set out for the great city : but there was not a dry eye in the parish at his departure, although he prevailed upon his father to pay, in his absence, all the pensions he had granted to those who could not live on the fruit of their own industry. In what manner he spent his time at London, it is not my business to inquire ; tho' I know pretty well what kind of lives are led by gemmen of your inns of court. I myself once belonged to Serjeant's Inn, and was perhaps as good a wit and a critic as any Templar of them all. Nay, as for that matter, tho' I despise vanity, I can aver, with a safe conscience, that I had once the honour to belong to the society called the Town : we

were all of us attorneys' clerks, gemmen, and had our meetings at an alehouse in Butcher-row, where we regulated the diversions of the theatre.

'But, to return from this digression, sir Everhard Greaves did not seem to be very well pleased with the conduct of his son at London: he got notice of some irregularities and scrapes into which he had fallen; and the squire seldom wrote to his father, except to draw upon him for money, which he did so fast, that, in eighteen months, the old gentleman lost all patience.

'At this period squire Darnel chanced to die, leaving an only daughter, a minor, heiress of three thousand a-year, under the guardianship of her uncle Antony, whose brutal character all the world knows. The breath was no sooner out of his brother's body, than he resolved, if possible, to succeed him in parliament, as representative for the borough of Ashenton. Now, you must know, that this borough had been, for many years, a bone of contention between the families of Greaves and Darnel; and at length, the difference was compromised, by the interposition of friends, on condition that sir Everhard and squire Darnel should alternately represent the place in parliament: they agreed to this compromise for their mutual convenience; but they were never heartily reconciled. Their political principles did not tally; and their wives looked upon each other as rivals in fortune and magnificence: so that there was no intercourse between them, thof they lived in the same neighbourhood: on the contrary, in all disputes, they constantly headed the opposite parties. Sir Everhard, understanding that Antony Darnel had begun to canvass, and was putting every iron in the fire, in violation and contempt of the *pactum familiæ* before mentioned, fell into a violent passion that brought on a severe fit of the gout, by which he was disabled from giving personal attention to his own interest. My father, indeed, employed all his diligence and address, and spared neither money, time, nor constitution, till at length he drank himself into a consumption, which was the death of him. But, after all, there

is a great difference between a steward and a principal. Mr. Darnel attended *in propria persona*, flattered and caressed the women, feasted the electors, hired mobs, made processions, and scattered about his money in such a manner, that our friends durst hardly show their heads in public.

‘ At this very crisis, our young squire, to whom his father had written an account of the transaction, arrived unexpectedly at Greavesbury-hall, and had a long private conference with sir Everhard. The news of his return spread like wild-fire through all that part of the country; bonfires were made, and the bells set a-ringing in several towns and steeples; and, next morning, above seven hundred people were assembled at the gate, with music, flags, and streamers, to welcome their young squire, and accompany him to the borough of Ashenton. He set out on foot with his retinue, and entered one end of the town, just as Mr. Darnel’s mob had come in at the other: both arrived about the same time at the market-place; but Mr. Darnel, mounting first into the balcony of the town-house, made a long speech to the people in favour of his own pretensions, not without some invidious reflections glanced at sir Everhard, his competitor. We did not much mind the acclamations of his party, which we knew had been hired for the purpose: but we were in some pain for Mr. Greaves, who had not been used to speak in public. He took his turn, however, in the balcony, and, uncovering his head, bowed all around with the most engaging courtesy. He was dressed in a green frock, trimmed with gold, and his own dark hair flowed about his ears in natural curls, while his face was overspread with a blush, that improved the glow of youth to a deeper crimson; and, I dare say, set many a female heart a palpitating. When he made his first appearance, there was just such a humming and clapping of hands as you may have heard when the celebrated Barry comes upon the stage in *King Lear* or *Othello*, or any other top character: but how agreeably were we disappointed, when our young gentleman made such an oration as would not have  
‘ Egmont, or a



Murray ! While he spoke, all was hushed in admiration and attention : you could have almost heard a feather drop to the ground. It would have charmed you to hear with what modesty he recounted the services which his father and grandfather had done to the corporation ; with what eloquence he expatiated upon the shameful infraction of the treaty subsisting between the two families ; and with what keen and spirited strokes of satire he retorted the sarcasms of Darnel. He no sooner concluded his harangue, than there was such a burst of applause as seemed to rend the very sky. Our music immediately struck up ; our people advanced with their ensigns ; and, as every man had a good cudgel, broken heads would have ensued, had not Mr. Darnel and his party thought proper to retreat with uncommon despatch. He never offered to make another public entrance, as he saw the torrent ran so violently against him ; but sat down with his loss, and withdrew his opposition, though, at bottom, extremely mortified and incensed. Sir Everhard was unanimously elected, and appeared to be the happiest man upon earth ; for, besides the pleasure arising from his victory over his competitor, he was now fully satisfied, that his son, instead of disgracing, would do honour to his family. It would have moved a heart of stone, to see with what a tender transport of paternal joy he received his dear Launcelot, after having heard of his deportment and success at Ashenton ; where, by the by, he gave a ball to the ladies, and displayed as much elegance and politeness as if he had been bred at the court of Versailles.

‘ This joyous season was of short duration : in a little time, all the happiness of the family was overcast by a sad incident, which has left such an unfortunate impression upon the mind of the young gentleman, as, I am afraid, will never be effaced. Mr. Darnel’s niece and ward, the great heiress, whose name is Aurelia, was the most celebrated beauty of the whole country ; if I said the whole kingdom, or, indeed, all Europe, perhaps I should but barely do her justice. I don’t pretend to be a limner, gemmen, nor does it become me to delineate

such excellence ; but, surely, I may presume to repeat,  
from the play,

O, she is all that painting can express,  
Or youthful poets fancy when they love !

‘ At that time she might be about seventeen ; tall and fair, and so exquisitely shaped—you may talk of your Venus de Medicis, your Dianas, your Nymphs, and Galateas ; but if Praxiteles, and Roubillac, and Wilton were to lay their heads together, in order to make a complete pattern of beauty, they would hardly reach her model of perfection. As for complexion, poets will talk of blending the lily with the rose ; and bring in a parcel of similes of cowslips, carnations, pinks, and daisies. There’s Dolly, now, has got a very good complexion ; indeed, she’s the very picture of health and innocence ; you are, indeed, my pretty lass : but *parva componere magnis*. Miss Darnel is all amazing beauty, delicacy, and dignity ! Then, the softness and expression of her fine blue eyes ; her pouting lips of coral hue ; her neck, that rises like a tower of alabaster, between two mounts of snow—I tell you what, gemmen, it don’t signify talking : if e’er a one of you was to meet this young lady alone, in the midst of a heath or common, or any unfrequented place, he would down on his knees, and think he kneeled before some supernatural being. I’ll tell you more ; she not only resembles an angel in beauty, but a saint in goodness, and a hermit in humility : so void of all pride and affectation ; so soft, and sweet, and affable, and humane ! Lord ! I could tell such instances of her charity ! Sure enough, she and sir Launcelot were formed by nature for each other : howsoever, the cruel hand of fortune has intervened, and severed them for ever. Every soul, that knew them both, said it was a thousand pities but they should come together, and extinguish, in their happy union, the mutual animosity of the two families, which had so often embroiled the whole neighbourhood. Nothing was heard but the praises of Miss Aurelia Darnel and Mr. Launcelot Greaves ; and, no doubt, the parties were prepossessed, by this applause, in

favour of each other. At length, Mr. Greaves went one Sunday to her parish-church; but though the greater part of the congregation watched their looks, they could not perceive that she took the least notice of him, or that he seemed to be struck with her appearance. He afterwards had an opportunity of seeing her, more at leisure, at the York assembly, during the races; but this opportunity was productive of no good effect, because he had that same day quarrelled with her uncle on the turf. An old grudge, you know, gemmen, is soon inflamed to a fresh rupture. It was thought Mr. Darnel came on purpose to show his resentment. They differed about a bet upon Miss Cleverlegs; and, in the course of the dispute, Mr. Darnel called him a petulant boy. The young squire, who was hasty as gunpowder, told him he was man enough to chastise him for his insolence; and would do it on the spot, if he thought it would not interrupt the diversion. In all probability, they would have come to points immediately, had not the gentlemen interposed: so that nothing farther passed, but abundance of foul language on the part of Mr. Antony, and a repeated defiance to single combat.

Mr. Greaves, making a low bow, retired from the field; and, in the evening, danced at the assembly with a young lady from the bishopric, seemingly in good temper and spirits, without having any words with Mr. Darnel, who was also present: but, in the morning, he visited that proud neighbour betimes; and they had almost reached a grove of trees on the north side of the town, when they were suddenly overtaken by half a dozen gentlemen, who had watched their motions. It was in vain for them to dissemble their design, which could not now take effect. They gave up their pistols, and a reconciliation was patched up by the pressing remonstrances of their common friends: but Mr. Darnel's hatred still rankled at bottom, and soon broke out in the sequel. About three months after this transaction, his niece Aurelia, with her mother, having been to visit a lady in the chariot, the horses being young, and not used to the traces, were startled at the braying of a jackass on the

common, and, taking fright, ran away with the carriage like lightning. The coachman was thrown from the box, and the ladies screamed piteously for help. Mr Greaves chanced to be a-horseback on the other side of an enclosure, when he heard their shrieks; and, riding up to the hedge, knew the chariot, and saw their disaster. The horses were then running full speed in such a direction, as to drive headlong over a precipice into a stone quarry, where they and the chariot, and the ladies, must be dashed to pieces. You may conceive, gemmen, what his thoughts were, when he saw such a fine young lady, in the flower of her age, just plunging into eternity; when he saw the lovely Aurelia on the brink of being precipitated among the rocks, where her delicate limbs must be mangled and torn asunder; when he perceived, that before he could ride round by the gate, the tragedy would be finished. The fence was so thick and high, flanked with a broad ditch on the outside, that he could not hope to clear it, although he was mounted on Scipio, bred out of Miss Cowslip, his sire Muley, and his grandsire the famous Arabian Mustapha. Scipio was bred by my father, who would not have taken a hundred guineas for him from any other person but the young squire. Indeed, I have heard my poor father say——'

By this time Ferret's impatience was become so outrageous, that he exclaimed, in a furious tone, 'D—n your father, and his horse, and his colt into the bargain!'

Tom made no reply; but began to strip with great expedition. Captain Crowe was so choked with passion, that he could utter nothing but disjointed sentences: he rose from his seat, brandished his horse-whip, and, seizing his nephew by the collar, cried, 'Odd's heartlikins! sirrah, I have a good mind. Devil fire your running tackle, you land-lubber! can't you steer without all this tacking hither and thither, and the Lord knows whither? 'Noint my block! I'd give thee a rope's end for thy supper, if it wan't——'

Dolly had conceived a sneaking kindness for the young lawyer, and, thinking him in danger of being roughly handled, flew to his relief. She twisted her hand in

Crowe's neckcloth without ceremony, crying, 'Sha't then, I tell thee, old codger. Who cares a vig vor thy voolish trantrums?'

While Crowe looked black in the face, and ran the risk of strangulation, under the gripe of this Amazon, Mr. Clarke, having disengaged himself of his hat, wig, coat, and waistcoat, advanced in an elegant attitude of manual offence towards the misanthrope, who snatched up a gridiron from the chimney-corner, and Discord seemed to clap her sooty wings in expectation of battle. But as the reader may have more than once already cursed the unconscionable length of this chapter, we must postpone to the next the incidents that succeeded this denunciation of war.

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CHAP. IV.—In which it appears, that the knight, when heartily set in for sleeping, was not easily disturbed.

In all probability, the kitchen of the Black Lion, from a domestic temple of society and good fellowship, would have been converted into a scene or a stage of sanguinary dispute, had not Pallas or Discretion interposed in the person of Mr. Fillet, and, with the assistance of the ostler, disarmed the combatants, not only of their arms, but also of their resentment. The impetuosity of Mr. Clarke was a little checked at sight of the gridiron, which Ferret brandished with uncommon dexterity; a circumstance, from whence the company were, upon reflection, induced to believe, that before he plunged into the sea of politics, he had occasionally figured in the character of that facetious droll who accompanies your itinerant physicians, under the familiar appellation of Merry Andrew, or Jack Pudding, and on a wooden stage entertains the populace with a solo on the salt-box, or a sonata on the tongs and gridiron. Be that as it may, the young lawyer seemed to be a little discomposed at the glancing of this extraordinary weapon of offence, which the fair hands of Dolly had scoured, until it shone as bright as the shield of Achilles; or as the emblem of good old English fare,

which hangs by a red ribbon round the neck of that thrice-honoured sage's head, in velvet bonnet cased, who presides by rotation at the genial board, distinguished by the title of the Beef-steak Club; where the delicate rumps irresistibly attract the stranger's eye; and, while they seem to cry, 'Come cut me—come cut me,' constrain, by wondrous sympathy, each mouth to overflow: where the obliging and humorous Jemmy Bancraft, the gentle Billy Havard, replete with human kindness, and the generous Johnny Beard, respected and beloved by all the world, attend as the priests and ministers of mirth, good cheer, and jollity, and assist with culinary art the raw, unpractised, awkward guest.

But, to return from this digressive simile; the ostler no sooner stepped between those menacing antagonists, than Tom Clarke very quietly resumed his clothes, and Mr. Ferret resigned the gridiron without farther question. The doctor did not find it quite so easy to release the throat of captain Crowe from the masculine grasp of the virago Dolly, whose fingers could not be disengaged until the honest seaman was almost at the last gasp. After some pause, during which he panted for breath, and untied his neckcloth, 'D—n thee, for a brimstone galley,' cried he; 'I never was so grappled withal since I knew a card from a compass. Adzooks! the jade has so taughtened my rigging, d'ye see, that I—Snatch my bowlings, if I come athwart thy hawser, I'll turn thy keel upwards, or mayhap set thee a driving under thy bare poles. I will—I will, you hell-fire, saucy—I will.'

Dolly made no reply; but, seeing Mr. Clarke sit down again with great composure, took her station likewise at the opposite side of the apartment. Then Mr. Fillet requested the lawyer to proceed with his story, which, after three hems, he accordingly prosecuted in these words:—

'I told you, gemmen, that Mr. Greaves was mounted on Scipio, when he saw Miss Darnel and her mother in danger of being hurried over a precipice. Without reflecting a moment, he gave Scipio the spur, and at one spring he cleared five and twenty feet, over hedge and

ditch, and every obstruction. Then he rode full speed, in order to turn the coach-horses; and, finding them quite wild and furious, endeavoured to drive against the counter of the hither horse, which he missed, and staked poor Scipio on the pole of the coach. The shock was so great, that the coach-horses made a full stop within ten yards of the quarry, and Mr. Greaves was thrown forwards towards the coach-box, which mounting with admirable dexterity, he seized the reins before the horses could recover of their fright. At that instant the coachman came running up, and loosed them from the traces with the utmost despatch. Mr. Greaves had now time to give his attention to the ladies, who were well-nigh distracted with fear. He no sooner opened the chariot-door, than Aurelia, with a wildness of look, sprang into his arms, and, clasping him round the neck, fainted away. I leave you to guess, gemmen, what were his feelings at this instant. The mother was not so discomposed but that she could contribute to the recovery of her daughter, whom the young squire still supported in his embrace. At length she retrieved the use of her senses; and perceiving the situation in which she was, the blood revisited her face with a redoubled glow, while she desired him to set her down upon the turf.

‘Mrs. Darnel, far from being shy or reserved in her compliments of acknowledgements, kissed Mr. Launcelot without ceremony, the tears of gratitude running down her cheeks: she called him her dear son, her generous deliverer, who, at the hazard of his own life, had saved her and her child from the most dismal fate that could be imagined. Mr. Greaves was so much transported on this occasion, that he could not help disclosing a passion, which he had hitherto industriously concealed. What I have done, said he, was but a common office of humanity, which I would have performed for any of my fellow-creatures; but, for the preservation of Miss Aurelia Darnel, I would at any time sacrifice my life with pleasure. The young lady did not hear this declaration unmoved: her face was again flushed, and her eyes sparkled with pleasure: nor was the youth’s confession

disagreeable to the good lady her mother, who at one glance perceived all the advantages of such a union between the two families.

‘ Mr. Greaves proposed to send the coachman to his father’s stables for a pair of sober horses, that could be depended upon, to draw the ladies home to their own habitation; but they declined the offer, and chose to walk, as the distance was not great. He then insisted upon his being their conductor; and, each taking him under the arm, supported them to their own gate, where such an apparition filled all the domestics with astonishment. Mrs. Darnel, taking him by the hand, led him into the house, where she welcomed him with another affectionate embrace, and indulged him with an ambrosial kiss of Aurelia, saying, But for you, we had both been by this time in eternity: sure it was Heaven that sent you as an angel to our assistance! She kindly inquired if he had himself sustained any damage in administering that desperate remedy, to which they owed their lives. She entertained him with a small collation; and, in the course of the conversation, lamented the animosity which had so long divided two neighbouring families of such influence and character. He was not slow in signifying his approbation of her remarks, and expressing the most eager desire of seeing all those unhappy differences removed: in a word, they parted with mutual satisfaction.

‘ Just as he advanced from the outward gate, on his return to Greavesbury-hall, he was met by Antony Darnel on horseback, who, riding up to him with marks of surprise and resentment, saluted him with, Your servant, sir! Have you any commands for me? The other replying, with an air of indifference, None at all, Mr. Darnel asked, what had procured him the honour of a visit. The young gentleman, perceiving by the manner in which he spoke, that the old quarrel was not yet extinguished, answered, with equal disdain, that the visit was not intended for him; and that, if he wanted to know the cause of it, he might inform himself by his own servants. So I shall, cried the uncle of Aurelia, and perhaps let you know my sentiments of the matter.—Hereafter as it may



be, said the youth; who, turning out of the avenue, walked home, and made his father acquainted with the particulars of this adventure.

‘ The old gentleman chid him for his rashness, but seemed pleased with the success of his attempt; and still more so, when he understood his sentiments of Aurelia, and the deportment of the ladies.

‘ Next day the son sent over a servant with a compliment, to inquire about their health; and the messenger, being seen by Mr. Darnel, was told that the ladies were indisposed, and did not choose to be troubled with messages. The mother was really seized with a fever, produced by the agitation of her spirits, which every day became more and more violent, until the physicians despaired of her life. Believing that her end approached, she sent a trusty servant to Mr. Greaves, desiring that she might see him without delay; and he immediately set out with the messenger, who introduced him in the dark. He found the old lady in bed, almost exhausted, and the fair Aurelia sitting by her, overwhelmed with grief, her lovely hair in the utmost disorder, and her charming eyes inflamed with weeping. The good lady beckoning Mr. Launcelot to approach, and directing all the attendants to quit the room, except a favourite maid, from whom I learned the story, she took him by the hand, and, fixing her eyes upon him with all the fondness of a mother, shed some tears in silence, while the same marks of sorrow trickled down his cheeks. After this affecting pause, My dear son, said she, O, that I could have lived to see you so indeed! you find me hastening to the goal of life. Here the tender-hearted Aurelia, being unable to contain herself longer, broke out into a violent passion of grief, and wept aloud. The mother, waiting patiently till she had thus given vent to her anguish, calmly entreated her to resign herself submissively to the will of Heaven: then, turning to Mr. Launcelot, I had indulged, said she, a fond hope of seeing you allied to my family. This is no time for me to insist upon the ceremonies and forms of a vain world: Aurelia looks upon you with the eyes of tender prepossession. No

sooner had she pronounced these words, than he threw himself on his knees before the young lady, and, pressing her hand to his lips, breathed the softest expressions which the most delicate love could suggest. I know, resumed the mother, that your passion is mutually sincere; and I should die satisfied, if I thought your union would not be opposed: but that violent man, my brother-in-law, who is Aurelia's sole guardian, will thwart her wishes with every obstacle that brutal resentment and implacable malice can contrive. Mr. Greaves, I have long admired your virtues, and am confident that I can depend upon your honour. You shall give me your word, that, when I am gone, you will take no steps in this affair without the concurrence of your own father; and endeavour, by all fair and honourable means, to vanquish the prejudices, and obtain the consent of her uncle: the rest we must leave to the dispensations of Providence.

The squire promised, in the most solemn and fervent manner, to obey all her injunctions, as the last dictates of a parent whom he should never cease to honour. Then she favoured them both with a great deal of salutary advice, touching their conduct before and after marriage; and presented him with a ring, as a memorial of her affection: at the same time, he pulled another off his finger, and made a tender of it as a pledge of his love to Aurelia, whom her mother permitted to receive this token. Finally, he took a last farewell of the good matron, and returned to his father, with the particulars of this interview.

In two days Mrs. Darnel departed this life, and Aurelia was removed to the house of a relation, where her grief had like to have proved fatal to her constitution.

In the mean time, the mother was no sooner committed to the earth, than Mr. Greaves, mindful of her exhortations, began to take measures for a reconciliation with the guardian. He engaged several gentlemen to interpose their good offices; but they always met with the most mortifying repulse: and at last Antony Darnel declared, that his hatred to the house of Greaves was hereditary, habitual, and unconquerable. He swore he would

spend his heart's blood to perpetuate the quarrel; and that, sooner than his niece should match with young Launcelot, he would sacrifice her with his own hand. The young gentleman, finding his prejudice so rancorous and invincible, left off making farther advances; and, since he found it impossible to obtain his consent, resolved to cultivate the good graces of Aurelia, and wed her in despite of her implacable guardian. He found means to establish a literary correspondence with her, as soon as her grief was a little abated, and even to effect an interview, after her return to her own house: but he soon had reason to repent of this indulgence. The uncle entertained spies upon the young lady, who gave him an account of this meeting; in consequence of which, she was suddenly hurried to some distant part of the country, which we never could discover.

'It was then we began to think Mr. Launcelot a little disordered in his brain; his grief was so wild, and his passion so impetuous. He refused all sustenance, neglected his person, renounced his amusements, rode out in the rain sometimes bare-headed, strolled about the fields all night, and became so peevish, that none of the domestics durst speak to him, without the hazard of broken bones. Having played these pranks for about three weeks, to the unspeakable chagrin of his father, and the astonishment of all who knew him, he suddenly grew calm, and his good humour returned: but this, as your sea-faring people say, was a deceitful calm, that soon ushered in a dreadful storm.

'He had long sought an opportunity to tamper with some of Mr. Darnel's servants, who could inform him of the place where Aurelia was confined; but there was not one about the family who could give him that satisfaction; for the persons who accompanied her remained as a watch upon her motions, and none of the other domestics were privy to the transaction. All attempts proving fruitless, he could no longer restrain his impatience; but, throwing himself in the way of the uncle, upbraided him in such harsh terms, that a formal challenge ensued. They agreed to decide their difference without witnesses;

and one morning, before sun-rise, met on that very common where Mr. Greaves had saved the life of Aurelia: The first pistol was fired on each side without taking effect; but Mr. Darnel's second wounded the young squire in the flank: nevertheless, having a pistol in reserve, he desired his antagonist to ask his life. The other, instead of submitting, drew his sword; and Mr. Greaves, firing his piece in the air, followed his example. The contest then became very hot, though of short continuance. Darnel, being disarmed at the first onset, our young squire gave him back his sword, which he was base enough to use a second time against his conqueror. Such an instance of repeated ingratitude and brutal ferocity divested Mr. Greaves of his temper and forbearance. He attacked Mr. Antony with great fury, and, at the first lounge, ran him up to the hilt; at the same time seizing, with his left hand, the shell of his enemy's sword, which he broke in disdain. Mr. Darnel having fallen, the other immediately mounted his horse, which he had tied to a tree before the engagement; and, riding full speed to Ashenton, sent a surgeon to Antony's assistance. He afterwards ingenuously confessed all these particulars to his father, who was overwhelmed with consternation, for the wounds of Darnel were judged mortal; and, as no person had seen the particulars of the duel, Mr. Launcelot might have been convicted of murder.

On these considerations, before a warrant could be served upon him, the old knight, by dint of the most eager entreaties, accompanied with marks of horror and despair, prevailed upon his son to withdraw himself from the kingdom, until such time as the storm should be overblown. Had his heart been unengaged, he would have chosen to travel; but at that period, when his whole soul was engrossed, and so violently agitated by his passion for Aurelia, nothing but the fear of seeing the old gentleman run distracted, would have induced him to desist from the pursuit of that young lady, far less quit the kingdom where she resided. Well then, gemmen, he repaired to Harwich, where he embarked for Holland, from whence he proceeded to Brussels, where he pro-

cured a passport from the French king, by virtue of which he travelled to Marseilles, and there took a tartan for Genoa. The first letter sir Everhard received from him was dated at Florence. Meanwhile the surgeon's prognostic was not altogether verified. Mr. Darnel did not die immediately of his wounds; but he lingered a long time, as it were, in the arms of death, and even partly recovered: yet, in all probability, he will never be wholly restored to the enjoyment of health; and is obliged every summer to attend the hot well at Bristol. As his wounds began to heal, his hatred to Mr. Greaves seemed to revive with augmented violence; and he is now, if possible, more than ever determined against all reconciliation. Mr. Launcelot, after having endeavoured to amuse his imagination with a succession of curious objects, in a tour of Italy, took up his residence at a town called Pisa, and there fell into a deep melancholy, from which nothing could rouse him but the news of his father's death.

'The old gentleman (God rest his soul!) never held up his head after the departure of his darling Launcelot, and the dangerous condition of Darnel kept up his apprehension: this was reinforced by the obstinate silence of the youth, and certain accounts of his disordered mind, which he had received from some of those persons, who take pleasure in communicating disagreeable tidings. A complication of all these grievances, co-operating with a severe fit of the gout and gravel, produced a fever, which, in a few days, brought sir Everhard to his long home; after he had settled his affairs with heaven and earth, and made his peace with God and man. I'll assure you, gentlemen, he made a most edifying and Christian end: he died regretted by all his neighbours, except Antony; and might be said to be embalmed by the tears of the poor, to whom he was always a bounteous benefactor.

'When the son, now sir Launcelot, came home, he appeared so meagre, wan, and hollow-eyed, that the servants hardly knew their young master. His first care was to take possession of his fortune, and settle accounts with the steward, who had succeeded my father. These

affairs being discussed, he spared no pains to get intelligence concerning Miss Darnel, and soon learned more of that young lady than he desired to know; for it was become the common talk of the country, that a match was agreed upon between her and young Squire Sycamore, a gentleman of a very great fortune. These tidings were probably confirmed under her own hand, in a letter which she wrote to sir Launcelot. The contents were never exactly known but to the parties themselves: nevertheless, the effects were too visible; for, from that blessed moment, he spoke not one word to any living creature for the space of three days; but was seen sometimes to shed a flood of tears, and sometimes to burst out into a fit of laughing. At last, he broke silence, and seemed to wake from his disorder. He became more fond than ever of the exercise of riding, and began to amuse himself again with acts of benevolence. One instance of his generosity and justice deserves to be recorded in brass or marble. You must know, gemmen, the rector of the parish was lately dead, and sir Everhard had promised the presentation to another clergyman. In the mean time, sir Launcelot, chancing one Sunday to ride through a lane, perceived a horse, saddled and bridled, feeding on the side of a fence; and, casting his eyes around, beheld, on the other side of the hedge, an object lying extended on the ground, which he took to be the body of a murdered traveller. He forthwith alighted; and, leaping into the field, descried a man at full length, wrapped in a great coat, and writhing in agony: approaching nearer, he found it was a clergyman, in his gown and cassock. When he inquired into the case, and offered his assistance, the stranger rose up, thanked him for his courtesy, and declared that he was now very well. The knight, who thought there was something mysterious in this incident, expressed a desire to know the cause of his rolling on the grass in that manner; and the clergyman, who knew his person, made no scruple in gratifying his curiosity. You must know, sir, said he, I serve the curacy of your own parish, for which the late incumbent paid me twenty pounds a year; but this sum being insufficient

to maintain my wife and children, who are five in number, I agreed to read prayers, in the afternoon, at another church about four miles from hence ; and for this additional duty I receive ten pounds more. As I keep a horse, it was formerly an agreeable exercise, rather than a toil ; but of late years, I have been afflicted with a rupture, for which I consulted the most eminent operators in the kingdom ; but I have no cause to rejoice in the effects of their advice, though one of them assured me I was completely cured. The malady is now more troublesome than ever, and often comes upon me so violently, while I am on horseback, that I am forced to alight, and lie down upon the ground, until the cause of the disorder can, for the time, be reduced.

‘ Sir Launcelot not only condoled with him upon his misfortune, but desired him to throw up the second cure, and he would pay him ten pounds a-year out of his own pocket. Your generosity confounds me, good sir, cried the clergyman ; and yet, I ought not to be surprised at any instance of benevolence in sir Launcelot Greaves ; but I will check the fulness of my heart. I shall only observe, that your good intention towards me can hardly take effect : the gentleman, who is to succeed the late incumbent, has given me notice to quit the premises, as he has provided a friend of his own for the curacy.— What ! cried the knight, does he mean to take your bread from you, without assigning any other reason ?— Surely, sir, replied the ecclesiastic, I know of no other reason. I hope my morals are irreproachable, and that I have done my duty with a conscientious regard : I may venture an appeal to the parishioners, among whom I have lived these seventeen years. After all, it is natural for every man to favour his own friends in preference to strangers. As for me, I propose to try my fortune in the great city ; and I doubt not but Providence will provide for me and my little ones. To this declaration sir Launcelot made no reply ; but, riding home, set on foot a strict inquiry into the character of this man, whose name was Jenkins. He found that he was a reputed scholar, equally remarkable for his modesty and good life ; that

he visited the sick, assisted the needy, compromised disputes among his neighbours, and spent his time in such a manner as would have done honour to any Christian divine. Thus informed, the knight sent for the gentleman to whom the living had been promised, and accosted him to this effect: Mr. Tootle, I have a favour to ask of you. The person who serves the cure of this parish is a man of good character, beloved by the people, and has a large family: I shall be obliged to you if you will continue him in the curacy. The other told him he was sorry he could not comply with his request, seeing that he had already promised the curacy to a friend of his own. No matter, replied sir Launcelot; since I have not interest with you, I will endeavour to provide for Mr. Jenkins in some other way.

‘That same afternoon he walked over to the curate’s house, and told him, that he had spoken in his behalf to Dr. Tootle; but the curacy was pre-engaged. The good man having made a thousand acknowledgments for the trouble his honour had taken; I have not interest sufficient to make you a curate, said the knight, but I can give you the living itself, and that you shall have. So saying, he retired, leaving Mr. Jenkins incapable of uttering one syllable, so powerfully was he struck with this unexpected turn of fortune. The presentation was immediately made out; and, in a few days, Mr. Jenkins was put in possession of his benefice, to the inexpressible joy of the congregation. Hitherto every thing went right, and every unprejudiced person commended the knight’s conduct: but, in a little time, his generosity seemed to overleap the bounds of discretion, and even, in some cases, might be thought tending to a breach of the king’s peace. For example, he compelled, *vi et armis*, a rich farmer’s son to marry the daughter of a cottager, whom the young fellow had debauched. Indeed, it seems there was a promise of marriage in the case, though it could not be legally ascertained. The wench took on dismally; and her parents had recourse to sir Launcelot, who, sending for the delinquent, expostulated with him severely on the injury he had done the young



woman, and exhorted him to save her life and reputation, by performing his promise; in which case, he, sir Launcelot, would give her three hundred pounds to her portion. Whether the farmer thought there was something interested in this uncommon offer, or was a little elevated by the consciousness of his father's wealth, he rejected the proposal with rustic disdain, and said, If so be as how the wench would swear the child to him, he would settle it with the parish; but declared that no squire in the land should oblige him to buckle with such a cracked pitcher. This resolution, however, he could not maintain; for in less than two hours, the rector of the parish had direction to publish the banns, and the ceremony was performed in due course.

'Now, though we know not precisely the nature of the arguments that were used with the farmer, we may conclude they were of the minatory species; for the young fe low could not, for some time, look any person in the face. The knight acted as the general redresser of grievances. If a woman complained to him of being ill-treated by her husband, he first inquired into the foundation of the complaint; and, if he found it just, catechised the defendant. If this warning had no effect, and the man proceeded to fresh acts of violence, then this judge took the execution of the law in his own hand, and horse-whipped the party. Thus he involved himself in several lawsuits, that drained him of pretty large sums of money. He seemed particularly incensed at the least appearance of oppression; and supported divers poor tenants against the extortion of their landlords: nay, he has been known to travel two hundred miles as a volunteer, to offer his assistance in the cause of a person, who, he heard, was, by chicanery and oppression, wronged of a considerable estate. He accordingly took her under his protection, relieved her distresses, and was at a vast expense in bringing the suit to a determination; which being unfavourable to his client, he resolved to bring an appeal into the House of Lords, and certainly would have executed his purpose, if the gentlewoman had not the interim.'

At this period Ferret interrupted the narrator, by observing, that the said Greaves was a common nuisance, and ought to be prosecuted on the statute of barratry. 'No sir,' resumed Mr. Clarke, 'he cannot be convicted of barratry, unless he is always at variance with some person or other, a mover of suits and quarrels, who disturbs the peace under colour of law; therefore he is in the indictment styled, *Communis malefactor, calumniator, et seminator litium*.'—'Prythee, truce with thy definitions,' cried Ferret, 'and make an end of thy long-winded story: thou hast no title to be so tedious, until thou comest to have a coif in the court of common pleas.' Tom smiled contemptuously, and had just opened his mouth to proceed, when the company were disturbed by a hideous repetition of groans, that seemed to issue from the chamber in which the body of the squire was deposited. The landlady snatched the candle, and ran into the room, followed by the doctor and the rest; and this accident naturally suspended the narration. In like manner we shall conclude the chapter, that the reader may have time to breathe, and digest what he has already heard.

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CHAP. V.—In which this recapitulation draws to a close.

When the landlady entered the room from whence the groaning proceeded, she found the squire lying on his back, under the dominion of the night-mare, which rode him so hard, that he not only groaned and snorted, but the sweat ran down his face in streams. The perturbation of his brain, occasioned by this pressure, and the fright he had lately undergone, gave rise to a very terrible dream, in which he fancied himself apprehended for a robbery. The horror of the gallows was strong upon him, when he was suddenly awaked by a violent shock from the doctor; and the company broke in upon his view, still perverted by fear, and bedimmed by slumber. His dream was now realized, by a full persuasion that he was surrounded by the constable and his gang. The

first object that presented itself to his disordered view was the figure of Ferret, who might very well have passed for the finisher of the law ; against him, therefore, the first effort of his despair was directed. He started upon the floor, and seizing a certain utensil that shall be nameless, launched it at the misanthrope with such violence, that, had he not cautiously slipped his head aside, it is supposed that actual fire would have been produced from the collision of two such hard, solid substances. All future mischief was prevented by the strength and agility of captain Crowe, who, springing upon the assailant, pinioned his arms to his sides, crying, ' O d—n ye, if you are for running a-head, I 'll soon bring you to your bearings.' The squire, thus restrained, soon recollected himself, and, gazing upon every individual in the apartment, ' Wounds !' said he ' I have had an ugly dream : I thought, for all the world, they were carrying me to Newgate, and that there was Jack Ketch coome to vetch me before my taim.' Ferret, who was the person he had thus distinguished, eyeing him with a look of the most emphatic malevolence, told him it was very natural for a knave to dream of Newgate ; and that he hoped to see the day when this dream would be found a true prophecy, and the commonwealth purged of all such rogues and vagabonds ; but it could not be expected that the vulgar would be honest and conscientious, while the great were distinguished by profligacy and corruption. The squire was disposed to make a practical reply to this insinuation, when Mr. Ferret prudently withdrew himself from the scene of altercation. The good woman of the house persuaded his antagonist to take out his nap, assuring him that the eggs and bacon, with a mug of excellent ale, should be forthcoming in due season. The affair being thus fortunately adjusted, the guests returned to the kitchen, and Mr. Clarke resumed his story to this effect :—' You 'll please to take notice, gemmen, that besides the instances I have alleged of sir Launcelot's extravagant benevolence, I could recount a great many others of the same nature, and particularly the laudable vengeance he took of a country lawyer. I 'm sorry that

any such miscreant should belong to the profession. He was clerk of the assize, gemmen, in a certain town, not a great way distant; and having a blank pardon left by the judges for some criminals, whose cases were attended with favourable circumstances, he would not insert the name of one who could not procure a guinea for the fee; and the poor fellow, who had only stolen an hour-glass out of a shoemaker's window, was actually executed after a long respite, during which he had been permitted to go abroad, and earn his subsistence by his daily labour.

Sir Launcelot, being informed of this barbarous act of avarice, and having some ground that bordered on the lawyer's estate, not only rendered him contemptible and infamous, by exposing him as often as they met on the grand jury; but also, being vested with the property of the great tithes, proved such a troublesome neighbour, sometimes by making waste among his hay and corn, sometimes by instituting suits against him for petty trespasses, that he was fairly obliged to quit his habitation, and remove into another part of the kingdom. All these avocations could not divert sir Launcelot from the execution of a wild scheme, which has carried his extravagance to such a pitch, that I am afraid if a statute—you understand me, gemmen,—were sued, the jury would—I don't choose to explain myself farther on this circumstance. Be that as it may, the servants at Greavesbury-hall were not a little confounded, when their master took down from the family armoury a complete suit of armour, which had belonged to his great grandfather, sir Marmaduke Greaves, a great warrior, who lost his life in the service of his king. This armour being scoured, repaired, and altered, so as to fit sir Launcelot, a certain knight, whom I don't choose to name, because I believe he cannot be proved *compos mentis*, came down seemingly on a visit with two attendants; and, on the eve of the festival of St. George, the armour being carried into the chapel, sir Launcelot (Lord have mercy upon us!) remained all night in that dismal place alone and without light, though it was confidently reported, all over the country,

that the place was haunted by the spirit of his great grand-uncle, who, being lunatic, had cut his throat from ear to ear, and was found dead on the communion-table.'

It was observed, that while Mr. Clarke rehearsed this circumstance, his eyes began to stare, and his teeth to chatter; while Dolly, whose looks were fixed invariably on this narrator, growing pale, and hitching her joint-stool nearer the chimney, exclaimed, in a frightened tone, 'Moother, moother, in the neame of God, look to 'un! how a quakes! as I'm a precious sawl, a looks as if a saw something.' Tom forced a smile, and thus proceeded:—

'While sir Launcelot tarried within the chapel, with the doors all locked, the other knight stalked round and round it on the outside, with his sword drawn, to the terror of divers persons who were present at the ceremony. As soon as day broke, he opened one of the doors; and, going in to sir Launcelot, read a book for some time, which we did suppose to be the constitutions of knight-errantry: then we heard a loud slap which echoed through the whole chapel, and the stranger pronounce, with an audible and solemn voice, In the name of God, St. Michael, and St. George, I dub thee knight: be faithful, bold, and fortunate. You cannot imagine, gemmen, what an effect this strange ceremony had upon the people who were assembled. They gazed at one another in silent horror; and, when sir Launcelot came forth completely armed, took to their heels in a body, and fled with the utmost precipitation. I myself was overturned in the crowd; and this was the case with that very individual person who now serves him as a squire. He was so frightened that he could not rise, but lay roaring in such a manner, that the knight came up, and gave him a thwack with his lance across the shoulders, which roused him with a vengeance. For my own part, I freely own I was not altogether unmoved at seeing such a figure come stalking out of a church in the gray of the morning; for it recalled to my remembrance the idea of

the ghost in Hamlet, which I had seen acted in Drury Lane, when I made my first trip to London; and I had not yet got rid of the impression.

‘ Sir Launcelot, attended by the other knight, proceeded to the stable; from whence, with his own hands, he drew forth one of his best horses, a fine mettlesome sorrel, who had got blood in him, ornamented with rich trappings. In a trice, the two knights, and the other two strangers, who now appeared to be trumpeters, were mounted. Sir Launcelot’s armour was lackered black; and on his shield was represented the moon in her first quarter, with the motto, *Impleat orbem*. The trumpets having sounded a charge, the stranger pronounced, with a loud voice, God preserve this gallant knight in all his honourable achievements; and may he long continue to press the side of his now-adopted steed, which I denominate Bronzomarte, hoping that he will rival in swiftness and spirit Bayardo, Brigliadoro, or any other steed of past or present chivalry! After another flourish of the trumpets, all four clapped spurs to their horses, (sir Launcelot couching his lance) and galloped to and fro, as if they had been mad, to the terror and astonishment of all the spectators. What should have induced our knight to choose this here man for his squire, it is not easy to determine; for, of all the servants about the house, he was the least likely either to please his master, or engage in such an undertaking. His name is Timothy Crabshaw, and he acted in the capacity of whipper-in to sir Everhard: he afterwards married the daughter of a poor cottager, by whom he has several children, and was employed about the house as a ploughman and carter. To be sure, the fellow has a dry sort of humour about him: but he was universally hated among the servants, for his abusive tongue and perverse disposition, which often brought him into trouble; for though the fellow is as strong as an elephant, he has no more courage, naturally, than a chicken; I say naturally; because, since his being a member of knight-errantry, he has done some things that appear altogether incredible and preternatural.

‘ Timothy kept such a bawling, after he had received

the blow from sir Launcelot, that every body on the field thought some of his bones were broken; and his wife with five handlings came snivelling to the knight, who ordered her to send the husband directly to his house. Tim accordingly went thither, groaning piteously all the way, creeping along with his body bent like a Greenland canoe. As soon as he entered the court, the outward door was shut; and sir Launcelot, coming down stairs with a horsewhip in his hand, asked what was the matter with him, that he complained so dismally. To this question he replied, that it was as common as duck-weed in his country, for a man to complain when his bones were broken. What should have broken your bones? said the knight. I cannot guess, answered the other, unless it was that delicate switch, that your honour, in your mad pranks, handled so dexterously upon my carcase. Sir Launcelot then told him there was nothing so good for a bruise as a sweat, and he had the remedy in his hand. Timothy, eyeing the horsewhip askance, observed that there was another still more speedy; to wit, a moderate pill of lead, with a sufficient dose of gunpowder. No, rascal, cried the knight; that must be reserved for your betters. So saying, he applied the instrument so effectually, that Crabshaw soon forgot his fractured ribs, and capered about with great agility. When he had been disciplined in this manner to some purpose, the knight told him he might retire; but ordered him to return next morning, when he should have a repetition of the medicine, provided he did not find himself capable of walking in an erect posture. The gate was no sooner thrown open, than Timothy ran home with all the speed of a grayhound, and corrected his wife, by whose advice he had pretended to be so grievously damaged in his person. Nobody dreamed that he would next day present himself at Greavesbury-hall; nevertheless, he was there very early in the morning, and even closeted a whole hour with sir Launcelot. He came out making wry faces, and several times slapped himself on the forehead, crying, Bodikins! thof he be creasy, I an't, that I an't! When he was asked what was the matter, he

said he believed the devil had got into him, and he should never be his own man again. That same day the knight carried him to Asheaton, where he bespoke those accoutrements which he now wears; and, while these were making, it was thought the poor fellow would have run distracted. He did nothing but growl, and curse and swear to himself, run backwards and forwards between his own hut and Greavesbury-hall, and quarrel with the horses in the stable. At length his wife and family were removed into a snug farm-house that happened to be empty, and care taken that they should be comfortably maintained.

‘These precautions being taken, the knight, one morning at day-break, mounted Bronzomarte; and Crabshaw, as his squire, ascended the back of a clumsy cart-horse, called Gilbert. This again was looked upon as an instance of insanity in the said Crabshaw; for, of all the horses in the stable, Gilbert was the most stubborn and vicious, and had often like to have done a mischief to Timothy, while he drove the cart and plough. When he was out of humour, he would kick and plunge as if the devil was in him. He once thrust Crabshaw into the middle of a quickset-hedge, where he was terribly torn; another time he cantered him over his head into a quagmire, where he stuck, with his heels up, and must have perished, if people had not been passing that way; a third time he seized him in the stable, with his teeth, by the rim of the belly, and swung him off the ground, to the great danger of his life; and I’ll be hanged, if it was not owing to Gilbert, that Crabshaw was now thrown into the river. Thus mounted and accoutred, the knight and his squire set out on their first excursion. They turned off from the common highway, and travelled all that day without meeting any thing worth recounting; but, in the morning of the second day, they were favoured with an adventure. The hunt was upon a common, through which they travelled, and the hounds were in full cry after a fox; when Crabshaw, prompted by his own mischievous disposition, and neglecting the order of his master, who called aloud to him to desist, rode up to the hounds, and



crossed them at full gallop. The huntsman, who was not far off, made towards the squire, bestowed upon his head such a memento with his pole, as made the landscape dance before his eyes, and, in a twinkling, he was surrounded by all the fox-hunters, who plied their whips about his ears with infinite agility. Sir Launcelot, advancing at an easy pace, instead of assisting the disastrous squire, exhorted his adversaries to punish him severely for his insolence, and they were not slow in obeying this injunction. Crabshaw, finding himself in this disagreeable situation, and that there was no succour to be expected from his master, on whose prowess he had depended, grew desperate; and, clubbing his whip, laid about him with great fury, wheeling about Gilbert, who was not idle; for he, having received some of the favours intended for his rider, both bit with his teeth, and kicked with his heels; and at last made his way through the ring that encircled him, though not before he had broken the huntsman's leg, lamed one of the best horses on the field, and killed half a score of the hounds. Crabshaw, seeing himself clear of the fray, did not tarry to take leave of his master, but made the most of his way to Greavesbury-hall, where he appeared with hardly any vestige of the human countenance, so much had he been defaced in this adventure. He did not fail to raise a great clamour against sir Launcelot, whom he cursed as a coward in plain terms, swearing he would never serve him another day: but whether he altered his mind on cooler reflection, or was lectured by his wife, who well understood her own interest, he rose with the cock, and went again in quest of sir Launcelot, whom he found on the eve of a very hazardous enterprise. In the midst of a lane, the knight happened to meet with a party of about forty recruits, commanded by a serjeant, a corporal, and a drummer; which last had his drum slung at his back; but, seeing such a strange figure mounted on a high-spirited horse, he was seized with an inclination to divert his company. With this view he braced his drum, and hanging it in its proper position, began to beat a point of war, advancing  
and the very nose of Bronzomarte; while the corporal

exclaimed, D—n me, who have we got here? old king Stephen, from the horse-armoury in the Tower, or the fellow that rides armed at the Lord Mayor's show? The knight's steed seemed, at least, as well pleased with the sound of the drum as were the recruits that followed it; and signified his satisfaction in some curvetings and caprioles, which did not at all discompose the rider, who, addressing himself to the serjeant, Friend, said he, you ought to teach your drummer better manners. I would chastise the fellow on the spot for his insolence, were it not out of the respect I bear to his majesty's service. Respect mine ——! cried this ferocious commander; what, d'ye think to frighten us with your pewter pot on your scull, and your lacker'd potlid on your arm? Get out of the way, and be d——d, or I'll raise, with my halberd, such a clutter upon your target, that you'll remember it the longest day you have to live. At that instant, Crabshaw arriving upon Gilbert, So, rascal, said sir Launcelot, you are returned. Go, and beat in that scoundrel's drum-head.

'The squire, who saw no weapons of offence about the drummer but a sword, which he hoped the owner durst not draw; and being resolved to exert himself in making atonement for his desertion, advanced to execute his master's orders: but Gilbert, who liked not the noise, refused to proceed in the ordinary way. Then the squire turning his tail to the drummer, he advanced in a retrograde motion, and, with one kick of his heels, not only broke the drum in a thousand pieces, but laid the drummer in the mire, with such a blow upon his hip-bone, that he halted all the days of his life. The recruits, perceiving the discomfiture of their leader, armed themselves with stones; the serjeant raised his halberd in a posture of defence; and immediately a severe action ensued. By this time Crabshaw had drawn his sword, and began to lay about him like a devil incarnate; but, in a little time, he was saluted by a volley of stones, one of which knocked out two of his grinders, and brought him to the earth, where he had like to have found no quarter; for the whole company crowded about him, with their cudgels

brandished ; and perhaps he owed his preservation to their pressing so hard, that they hindered one another from using their weapons. Sir Launcelot, seeing, with indignation, the unworthy treatment his squire had received, and scorning to stain his lance with the blood of plebeians, instead of couching it in the rest, seized it by the middle, and fetching one blow at the serjeant, broke in twain the halberd which he had raised as a quarter-staff for his defence. The second stroke encountered his pate, which, being the hardest part about him, sustained the shock without damage ; but the third lighting on his ribs, he honoured the giver with immediate prostration. The general being thus overthrown, sir Launcelot advanced to the relief of Crabshaw, and handled his weapon so effectually, that the whole body of the enemy were disabled or routed, before one cudgel had touched the carcase of the fallen squire. As for the corporal, instead of standing by his commanding officer, he had overleaped the hedge, and run to the constable of an adjoining village for assistance : accordingly, before Crabshaw could be properly remounted, the peace-officer arrived with his posse ; and by the corporal was charged with sir Launcelot and his squire, as two highwaymen. The constable, astonished at the martial figure of the knight, and intimidated at sight of the havock he had made, contented himself with standing at a distance, displaying the badge of his office, and reminding the knight that he represented his majesty's person. Sir Launcelot, seeing the poor man in great agitation, assured him, that his design was to enforce, not violate the laws of his country, and that he and his squire would attend him to the next justice of the peace ; but, in the mean time, he, in his turn, charged the peace-officer with the serjeant and the drummer, who had begun the fray. The justice had been a pettifogger, and was a sycophant to a nobleman in the neighbourhood, who had a post at court : he therefore thought he should oblige his patron, by showing his respect for the military ; and treated our knight with the most boorish insolence ; but refused to admit him into his house, until he had surrendered all his weapons of offence

to the constable. Sir Launcelot and his squire being found the aggressors, the justice insisted upon making out their mittimus, if they did not find bail immediately; and could hardly be prevailed upon to agree that they should remain at the house of the constable, who, being a publican, undertook to keep them in safe custody, until the knight could write to his steward. Meanwhile, he was bound over to the peace; and the serjeant, with his drummer, were told, they had a good action against him for assault and battery, either by information or indictment. They were not, however, so fond of the law as the justice seemed to be: their sentiments had taken a turn in favour of sir Launcelot, during the course of his examination, by which it appeared, that he was really a gentleman of fashion and fortune; and they resolved to compromise the affair, without the intervention of his worship. Accordingly, the serjeant repaired to the constable's house, where the knight was lodged; and humbled himself before his honour, protesting, with many oaths, that, if he had known his quality, he would have beaten the drummer's brains about his ears, for presuming to give his honour or his horse the least disturbance; thof the fellow, he believed, was sufficiently punished, in being a cripple for life. Sir Launcelot admitted of his apologies; and taking compassion on the fellow who had suffered so severely for his folly, resolved to provide for his maintenance. Upon the representation of the parties to the justice, the warrant was next day discharged; and the knight returned to his own house, attended by the serjeant and the drummer, mounted on horseback, the recruits being left to the corporal's charge.

The halberdier found the good effects of sir Launcelot's liberality; and his companion being rendered unfit for his majesty's service, by the heels of Gilbert, is now entertained at Greavesbury-hall, where he will probably remain for life. As for Crabshaw, his master gave him to understand, that, if he did not think him pretty well chastised for his presumption and flight, by the discipline he had undergone in the last two adventures, he would

turn him out of his service with disgrace. Timothy said, he believed it would be the greatest service he could do him, to turn him out of a service, in which he knew he should be rib-roasted every day, and murdered at last. In this situation were things at Greavesbury-hall, about a month ago, when I crossed the country to Ferrybridge, where I met my uncle: probably, this is the first incident of their second excursion; for the distance between this here house and sir Launcelot's estate does not exceed fourscore, or ninety miles.'

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CHAP. VI.—In which the reader will perceive, that, in some cases, madness is catching.

Mr. Clarke, having made an end of his narrative, the surgeon thanked him for the entertainment he had received, and Mr. Ferret shrugged up his shoulders in silent disapprobation. As for Captain Crowe, who used, at such pauses, to pour in a broadside of dismembered remarks, linked together like chain-shot, he spoke not a syllable for some time; but, lighting a fresh pipe at the candle, began to roll such voluminous clouds of smoke, as, in an instant, filled the whole apartment, and rendered himself invisible to the whole company. Though he thus shrouded himself from their view, he did not long remain concealed from their hearing. They first heard a strange dissonant cackle, which the doctor knew to be a sea-laugh; and this was followed by an eager exclamation of 'Rare pastime, strike my yards and topmasts!—I've a good mind—why shouldn't—many a losing voyage I've——smite my taffrel but I wool——' By this time, he had relaxed so much in his fumigation, that the tip of his nose and one eye re-appeared; and, as he had drawn his wig forwards, so as to cover his whole forehead, the figure that now saluted their eyes was much more ferocious and terrible than the fire-breathing chimæra of the ancients. Notwithstanding this dreadful

appearance, there was no indignation in his heart ; but, on the contrary, an agreeable curiosity, which he was determined to gratify. Addressing himself to Mr. Fillet, 'Prythee, doctor,' said he, 'canst tell, whether a man, without being rated a lord, or a baron, or a what d'ye call um, d'ye see, may n't take to the highway, in the way of a frolic, d'ye see?—adad ! for my own part, brother, I am resolved as how to cruise a bit in the way of an arrant : if so be as I can't at once be commander, mayhap I may be bore upon the book as a petty-officer, or the like, d'ye see.'

'Now, the Lord forbid !' cried Clarke, with tears in his eyes ; 'I'd rather see you dead, than brought to such a dilemma.'—'Mayhap thou wouldst,' answered the uncle ; 'for then, my lad, there would be some picking : aha ! dost thou tip me the traveller, my boy?' Tom assured him, he scorned any such mercenary views : 'I am only concerned,' said he, 'that you should take any step that might tend to the disgrace of yourself or your family ; and, I say again, I had rather die, than live to see you reckoned any otherwise than *compos*.'—'Die, and be d——d ! you shambling, half-timbered son of a ——,' cried the choleric Crowe ; 'dost talk to me of keeping reckoning, and compass ? I could keep a reckoning, and box my compass, long enough before thy keel-stone was laid : Sam Crowe is not come here to ask thy counsel how to steer his course.'—'Lord, sir,' resumed the nephew ; 'consider what people will say ; all the world will think you mad.'—'Set thy heart at ease, Tom,' cried the seaman : 'I'll have a trip to and again in this here channel. Mad ! what then ? I think, for my part, one half of the nation is mad, and the other not very sound : I don't see why I han't as good a right to be mad as another man. But, doctor, as I was saying, I'd be bound to you, if you would direct me where I can buy that same tackle that an arrant must wear. As for the matter of the long pole headed with iron, I'd never desire a better than a good boat-hook ; and I could make a special good target of that there tin sconce that

holds the candle: mayhap any blacksmith will hammer me a scullcap, d'ye see, out of an old brass kettle; and I can call my horse by the name of my ship, which was Musti.'

The surgeon was one of those wags who can laugh inwardly, without exhibiting the least outward mark of mirth or satisfaction. He at once perceived the amusement, which might be drawn from this strange disposition of the sailor, together with the most likely means which could be used to divert him from such an extravagant pursuit. He, therefore, tipped Clarke the wink with one side of his face, while the other was very gravely turned to the captain, whom he addressed to this effect: 'It is not far from hence to Sheffield, where you might be fitted completely in half a day; then you must wake your armour in church or chapel, and be dubbed. As for this last ceremony, it may be performed by any person whatsoever. Don Quixote was dubbed by his landlord; and there are many instances on record, of errants obliging and compelling the next person they met to cross their shoulders, and dub them knights. I myself would undertake to be your godfather; and I have interest enough to procure the keys of the parish church that stands hard by: besides, this is the eve of St. Martin, who was himself a knight-errant, and therefore a proper patron to a novice. I wish we could borrow sir Launcelot's armour for the occasion.'

Crowe, being struck with this hint, started up, and laying his fingers on his lips to enjoin silence, walked off softly on his tiptoes, to listen at the door of our knight's apartment, and judge whether or not he was asleep. Mr. Fillet took this opportunity to tell his nephew, that it would be in vain for him to combat this humour with reason and argument; but the most effectual way of diverting him from the plan of knight-errantry would be, to frighten him heartily, while he should be keeping his vigil in the church; towards the accomplishment of which purpose, he craved the assistance of the misanthrope as small as the nephew. Clarke seemed to relish the scheme;

and observed that his uncle, though endowed with courage enough to face any human danger, had at bottom a strong fund of superstition, which he seemed to have acquired, or at least improved, in the course of a sea life. Ferret, who perhaps would not have gone ten paces out of his road to save Crowe from the gallows, nevertheless engaged as an auxiliary, merely in hope of seeing a fellow creature miserable; and even undertook to be the principal agent in this adventure. For this office, indeed, he was better qualified than they could have imagined: in the bundle which he kept under his great coat, there was, together with divers nostrums, a small phial of liquid phosphorus, sufficient, as he had already observed, to frighten a whole neighbourhood out of their senses. In order to concert the previous measures without being overheard, these confederates retired with a candle and lantern into the stable; and their backs were scarce turned, when captain Crowe came in loaded with pieces of the knight's armour, which he had conveyed from the apartment of sir Launcelot, whom he had left fast asleep.

Understanding that the rest of the company were gone out for a moment, he could not resist the inclination he felt of communicating his intention to the landlady, who, with her daughter, had been too much engaged in preparing Crabshaw's supper, to know the purport of their conversation. The good woman, being informed of the captain's design to remain alone all night in the church, began to oppose it with all her rhetoric: she said it was setting his Maker at defiance, and a wilful running into temptation: she assured him, all the country knew that the church was haunted by spirits and hobgoblins; that lights had been seen in every corner of it; and a tall woman in white had one night appeared upon the top of the tower; that dreadful shrieks were often heard to come from the south aisle, where a murdered man had been buried; that she herself had seen the cross on the top of the steeple all a-fire; and one evening, as she passed a-horseback, close by the stile at the entrance into the



church-yard, the horse stood still, sweating and trembling, and had not power to proceed until she had repeated the Lord's Prayer.

These remarks made a strong impression on the imagination of Crowe, who asked, in some confusion, if she had got that same prayer in print. She made no answer; but reaching the prayer-book from a shelf, and turning up the leaf, put it into his hand: then the captain, having adjusted his spectacles, began to read, or rather spell aloud, with equal eagerness and solemnity. He had refreshed his memory so well as to remember the whole, when the doctor, returning with his companions, gave him to understand that he had procured the key of the chancel, where he might watch his armour as well as in the body of the church; and that he was ready to conduct him to the spot. Crowe was not now quite so forward as he had appeared before to achieve this adventure: he began to start objections with respect to the borrowed armour; he wanted to stipulate the comforts of a can of flip, and a candle's end, during his vigil; and hinted something of the damage he might sustain from your malicious imps of darkness.

The doctor told him the constitutions of chivalry absolutely required that he should be left in the dark alone and fasting, to spend the night in pious meditations; but that, if he had any fears which disturbed his conscience, he had much better desist, and give up all thoughts of knight-errantry, which could not consist with the least shadow of apprehension. The captain, stung by this remark, replied not a word; but gathering up the armour into a bundle, threw it on his back, and set out for the place of probation, preceded by Clarke with the lantern. When they arrived at the church, Fillet, who had procured the key from the sexton, who was his patient, opened the door, and conducted our novice into the middle of the chancel, where the armour was deposited; then bidding Crowe draw his hanger, committed him to the protection of Heaven, assuring him he would come back, and find him either dead or alive by day-break,

and perform the remaining part of the ceremony. So saying, he and the other associates shook him by the hand, and took their leave, after the surgeon had tilted up the lantern in order to take a view of his visage, which was pale and haggard.

Before the door was locked upon him, he called aloud, 'Hilloa! doctor, hip! another word, d'ye see.' They forthwith returned, to know what he wanted, and found him already in a sweat. 'Hark ye, brother,' said he, wiping his face, 'I do suppose as how one may pass away the time in whistling Black Joke, or singing Black-eyed Susan, or some such sorrowful ditty.'—'By no means,' cried the doctor: 'such pastimes are neither suitable to the place nor the occasion, which is altogether a religious exercise: if you have got any psalms by heart, you may sing a stave or two, or repeat the doxology.'—'Would I had Tom Laverick here,' replied our novice: 'he would sing you anthems like a seamew—a had been a clerk ashore: many's the time, and often, I've given him a rope's end for singing psalms in the larboard watch: would I had hired the son of a b—h to have taught me a cast of his office: but it can't be help, brother; if we can't go large, we must haul up a wind, as the saying is; if we can't sing, we must pray.' The company again left him to his devotion, and returned to the public house, in order to execute the essential part of their project.

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CHAP. VII.—In which the knight resumes his importance.

Doctor Fillet, having borrowed a couple of sheets from the landlady, dressed the misanthrope and Tom Clarke in ghastly apparel, which was reinforced by a few drops of liquid phosphorus from Ferret's phial, rubbed on the foreheads of the two adventurers. Thus equipped, they returned to the church with their conductor, who entered with them softly at an aisle which was opposite to a place where the novice kept watch. They stole unperceived through the body of the church; and

though it was so dark that they could not distinguish the captain with the eye, they heard the sound of his steps as he walked backwards and forwards on the pavement with uncommon expedition; and an ejaculation now and then escaped in a murmur from his lips.

The triumvirate having taken their station, with a large pew in their front, the two ghosts uncovered their heads, which, by help of the phosphorus, exhibited a pale and lambent flame, extremely dismal and ghastly to the view; then Ferret, in a squeaking tone, exclaimed, 'Samuel Crowe! Samuel Crowe!' The captain, hearing himself accosted in this manner, at such a time, and in such a place, replied, 'Hilloa!' and turning his eyes towards the quarter whence the voice seemed to proceed, beheld the terrible apparition. This no sooner saluted his view, than his hair bristled up, his knees began to knock, and his teeth to chatter, while he cried aloud, 'In the name of God, where are you bound, ho?' To this hail, the misanthrope answered, 'We are the spirits of thy grandmother Jane, and thy aunt Bridget.'

At mention of these names, Crowe's terrors began to give way to his resentment, and he pronounced, in a quick tone of surprise, mixed with indignation, 'What d'ye want? what d'ye want? what d'ye want, ho?' The spirit replied, 'We are sent to warn thee of thy fate.'—'From whence, ho?' cried the captain, whose choler had by this time well nigh triumphed over his fear. 'From heaven,' said the voice. 'Ye lie, ye b——s of hell!' did our novice exclaim: 'ye are damned, for heaving me out of my right, five fathom and a half by the lead, in burning brimstone. Don't I see the blue flames come out of your hawse-holes? mayhap you may be the devil himself for what I know; but, I trust in the Lord, d'ye see. I never disrated a kinsman, d'ye see; so don't come alongside of me: put about on t'other tack, d'ye see: you need not clap hard a weather, for you'll soon get to hell again with a flowing sail.'

So saying, he had recourse to his pater-noster; but perceiving the apparitions approach, he thundered out, 'vast! avast! sheer off, ye babes of hell, or I'll be

foul of your forelights !' He accordingly sprang forwards with his hanger, and very probably would have set the spirits on their way to the other world, had not he fallen over a pew in the dark, and entangled himself so much among the benches, that he could not immediately recover his footing. The triumvirate took this opportunity to retire ; and such was the precipitation of Ferret in his retreat, that he encountered a post, by which his right eye sustained considerable damage ; a circumstance, which induced him to inveigh bitterly against his own folly, as well as the impertinence of his companions, who had inveigled him into such a troublesome adventure. Neither he nor Clarke could be prevailed upon to revisit the novice. The doctor himself thought his disease was desperate ; and, mounting his horse, returned to his own habitation.

Ferret, finding all the beds of the public-house were occupied, composed himself to sleep in a Windsor chair at the chimney-corner ; and Mr. Clarke, whose disposition was extremely amorous, resolved to renew his practices on the heart of Dolly. He had reconnoitred the apartments in which the bodies of the knight and his squire were deposited, and discovered, close by the top of the staircase, a sort of a closet or hovel, just large enough to contain a truckle-bed, which, from some other particulars, he supposed to be the bed-chamber of his beloved Dolly, who had, by this time, retired to her repose. Full of this idea, and instigated by the demon of desire, Mr. Thomas crept softly up stairs, and lifting the latch of the closet door, his heart began to palpitate with joyous expectation : but before he could breathe the gentle effusions of his love, the supposed damsel started up, and seizing him by the collar with an Hereulean gripe, uttered, in the voice of Crabshaw, ' It wa'n't for nothing that I dreamed of Newgate, sirrah ; but I'd have thee to know an errant squire is not to be robbed by such a peddling thief as thee : here I hawld thee vast, an' the devil were in thy doublet : help ! murder ! vire ! help !'

It was impossible for Mr. Clarke to disengage himself, and equally impracticable to speak in his own vin-

dication; so that here he stood trembling and half throttled, until, the whole house being alarmed, the landlady and the ostler ran up stairs with a candle. When the light rendered objects visible, an equal astonishment prevailed on all sides. Crabshaw was confounded at sight of Mr. Clarke, whose person he well knew; and, releasing him instantly from his grasp, 'Bodikins!' cried he, 'I believe as how this hawse is haunted. Who thought to meet with measter laayer Clarke at midnight, and so far from hoam?' The landlady could not comprehend the meaning of this encounter; nor could Tom conceive how Crabshaw had transported himself hither from the room below, in which he saw him quietly reposed. Yet nothing was more easy than to explain this mystery: the apartment below was the chamber which the hostess and her daughter reserved for their own convenience; and this particular having been intimated to the squire while he was at supper, he had resigned the bed quietly, and been conducted hither in the absence of the company. Tom, recollecting himself as well as he could, professed himself of Crabshaw's opinion, that the house was haunted, declaring, that he could not well account for his being there in the dark; and, leaving those that were assembled to discuss this knotty point, retired down stairs, in hopes of meeting with his charmer, whom accordingly he found in the kitchen, just risen, and wrapped in a loose deshabelle.

The noise of Crabshaw's cries had awakened and aroused his master, who, rising suddenly in the dark; snatched up his sword that lay by his bed-side, and hastened to the scene of tumult, where all their mouths were opened at once, to explain the cause of the disturbance, and make an apology for breaking his honour's rest. He said nothing; but, taking the candle in his hand, beckoned to his squire to follow him into his apartment, resolving to arm and take horse immediately. Crabshaw understood his meaning; and, while he shuffled on his clothes, yawning hideously all the while, wished the lawyer at the devil for having visited him so unseasonably; and even cursed himself for the noise he had made, in

consequence of which, he foresaw he should now be obliged to forfeit his night's rest, and travel in the dark, exposed to the inclemencies of the weather. 'Pox rot thee, Tom Clarke, for a wicked laayer!' said he to himself: 'hadst thou been hanged at Bartlemy-tide, I should this night have slept in peace, that I should: and I would there was a blister on this plaguy tongue of mine, for making such a hollow-balloo, that I do. Five gallons of cold water has my poor belly been drenched with since night fell; so as my reins and my liver are all one as if they were turned into ice; and my whole harslet shakes and shivers like a vial of quicksilver. I have been dragged, half-drowned like a rotten ewe, from the bottom of a river; and who knows but I may be next dragged quite dead from the bottom of a coal-pit? If so be as I am, I shall go to hell, to be sure, for being consarned like in my own moorder, that I will, so I will: for, a plague on it, I had no business with the vagaries of this crazy-peated measter of mine; a pox on him, say I.'

He had just finished this soliloquy as he entered the apartment of his master, who desired to know what was become of his armour. Timothy, understanding that it had been left in the room when the knight undressed, began to scratch his head in great perplexity; and at last declared it as his opinion, that it must have been carried off by witchcraft. Then he related his adventure with Tom Clarke, who, he said, was conveyed to his bed-side, he knew not how; and concluded with affirming, they were no better than papishes, who did not believe in witchcraft. Sir Launcelot could not help smiling at his simplicity; but assuming a peremptory air, he commanded him to fetch the armour without delay, that he might afterwards saddle the horses, in order to prosecute their journey. Timothy retired, in great tribulation, to the kitchen, where, finding the misanthrope, whom the noise had also disturbed, and still impressed with the notion of his being a conjurer, he offered him a shilling, if he would cast a figure, and let him know what was become of his master's armour.

Ferret, in hope of producing more mischief, informed him, without hesitation, that one of the company conveyed it into the chancel of the church, where he would now find it deposited; at the same time presenting him with the key, which Mr. Fillet had left in his custody. The squire, who was none of those who set hobgoblins at defiance, being afraid to enter the church alone at these hours, bargained with the ostler to accompany and light him with a lantern. Thus attended, he advanced to the place where the armour lay in a heap, and loaded it upon the back of his attendant without molestation, the lance being shouldered over the whole. In this equipage they were just going to retire, when the ostler, hearing a noise at some distance, wheeled about with such velocity, that one end of the spear saluting Crabshaw's pate, the poor squire measured his length on the ground; and crushing the lantern in his fall, the light was extinguished. The other, terrified at these effects of his own sudden motion, threw down his burden, and would have betaken himself to flight, had not Crabshaw laid fast hold on his leg, that he himself might not be deserted. The sound of the pieces clattering on the pavement roused captain Crowe from a trance or slumber, in which he had lain since the apparition vanished; and he hallooed, or rather bellowed, with vast vociferation. Timothy and his friend were so intimidated by this terrific strain, that they thought no more of the armour, but ran home arm-in-arm, and appeared in the kitchen with all the marks of horror and consternation.

When sir Launcelot came forth, wrapped in his cloak, and demanded his arms, Crabshaw declared that the devil had them in possession; and this assertion was confirmed by the ostler, who pretended to know the devil by his roar. Ferret sat in his corner, maintaining the most mortifying silence, and enjoying the impatience of the knight, who in vain requested an explanation of this mystery. At length his eyes began to lighten, when, seizing Crabshaw in one hand, and the ostler in the other, he swore by heaven he would dash their souls out, and raze the house to the foundation, if they did not in-

stantly disclose the particulars of this transaction. The good woman fell on her knees, protesting, in the name of the Lord, that she was innocent as the child unborn, thof she had lent the captain a prayer-book, to learn the Lord's Prayer, a lantern and candle to light him to the church, and a couple of clean sheets for the use of the other gentlemen. The knight was more and more puzzled by this declaration; when Mr. Clarke, coming into the kitchen, presented himself with a low obeisance to his old patron.

Sir Launcelot's anger was immediately converted into surprise: he set at liberty the squire and the ostler; and, stretching out his hand to the lawyer, 'My good friend, Clarke,' said he, 'how came you hither? Can you solve this knotty point, which has involved us all in such confusion?'

Tom forthwith began a very circumstantial recapitulation of what happened to his uncle; in what manner he had been disappointed of the estate; how he had accidentally seen his honour, been enamoured of his character, and become ambitious of following his example. Then he related the particulars of the plan which had been laid down to divert him from his design; and concluded with assuring the knight, that the captain was a very honest man, though he seemed to be a little disordered in his intellects. 'I believe it,' replied sir Launcelot: 'madness and honesty are not incompatible; indeed I feel it by experience.'

Tom proceeded to ask pardon, in his uncle's name, for his having made so free with the knight's armour; and begged his honour, for the love of God, he would use his authority with Crowe, that he might quit all thoughts of knight-errantry, for which he was by no means qualified; for, being totally ignorant of the laws of the land, he would be continually committing trespasses, and bringing himself into trouble. He said, in case he should prove refractory, he might be apprehended by virtue of a friendly warrant, for having feloniously carried off the knight's accoutrements. 'Taking away another man's moveables,' said he, 'and personal goods, against the will of the



owner, is *furtum* and felony according to the statute; different indeed from robbery, which implies putting in fear on the king's highway, *in alta via regia violenter et felonice captum et asportatum, in magnum terrorem, &c.* for if the robbery be laid in the indictment as done *in quadam via pedestri*, in a foot-path, the offender will not be ousted of his clergy. It must be *in alta via regia*; and your honour will please to take notice, that robberies, committed on the river Thames, are adjudged as done *in alta via regia*; for the king's highstream is all the same as the king's highway.'

Sir Launcelot could not help smiling at Tom's learned investigation. He congratulated him on the progress he had made in the study of the law: he expressed his concern at the strange turn the captain had taken; and promised to use his influence in persuading him to desist from the preposterous design he had formed. The lawyer, thus assured, repaired immediately to the church, accompanied by the squire, and held a parley with his uncle, who, when he understood that the knight in person desired a conference, surrendered up the arms quietly, and returned to the public house. Sir Launcelot received the honest seaman with his usual complacency, and, perceiving great discomposure in his looks, said, he was sorry to hear he had passed such a disagreeable night to so little purpose. Crowe, having recruited his spirits with a bumper of brandy, thanked him for his concern, and observed, that he had passed many a hard night in his time; but such another as this he would not be bound to weather for the command of the whole British navy. 'I have seen Davy Jones in the shape of a blue flame, d'ye see, hopping to and fro on the spritsail yard-arm; and I've seen your jacks o' the lantern, and wills o' the wisp, and many such spirits both by sea and land: but to-night I've been boarded by all the devils and damned souls in hell, squeaking and squalling, and glimmering and glaring. Bounce went the door, crack went the pew, crash came the tackle; white-sheeted ghosts dancing in one corner by the glow-worm's light, black devils hobbling in another. Lord have mercy upon us! and I was hailed,

Tom, I was, by my grandmother Jane, and my aunt Bridget, d'ye see, a couple of damned—but they're roasting; that's one comfort, my lad.'

When he had thus disburdened his conscience, Sir Launcelot introduced the subject of the new occupation at which he aspired. 'I understand,' said he, 'that you are desirous of treading the paths of errantry, which, I assure you, are thorny and troublesome: nevertheless, as your purpose is to exercise your humanity and benevolence, so your ambition is commendable. But, towards the practice of chivalry, there is something more required than the virtues of courage and generosity. A knight-errant ought to understand the sciences, to be master of ethics or morality, to be well versed in theology, a complete casuist, and minutely acquainted with the laws of his country. He should not only be patient of cold, hunger, and fatigue; righteous, just, and valiant; but also chaste, religious, temperate, polite, and conversable, and have all his passions under the rein, except love, whose empire he should submissively acknowledge.' He said this was the very essence of chivalry; and no man had ever made such a profession of arms, without having first placed his affection upon some beauteous object, for whose honour, and at whose command, he would cheerfully encounter the most dreadful perils.

He took notice, that nothing could be more irregular than the manner in which Crowe had attempted to keep his vigil; for he had never served his noviciate, he had not prepared himself with abstinence and prayer, he had not provided a qualified godfather for the ceremony of dubbing, he had no armour of his own to wake; but, on the very threshold of chivalry, which is the perfection of justice, had unjustly purloined the arms of another knight: that this was a mere mockery of a religious institution, and, therefore, unpleasing in the sight of Heaven; witness the demons and hobgoblins that were permitted to disturb and torment him in his trial.

Crowe, having listened to these remarks with earnest attention, replied, after some hesitation, 'I am bound to you, brother, for your kind and christian counsel; I

doubt as how I've steered by a wrong chart, d'ye see. As for the matter of the sciences, to be sure, I know plain sailing and Mercator, and am an indifferent good seaman; thof I say it that should not say it; but as to all the rest, no better than the viol-block or the geer-capstan. Religion I ha'n't much overhauled; and we tars laugh at your polite conversation, thof, mayhap, we can chant a few ballads to keep the hands awake in the night watch: then for chastity, brother, I doubt that's not to be expected in a sailor just come ashore; after a long voyage: sure all those poor hearts won't be damned for steering in the wake of nature. As for a sweetheart, Bet Mizen of St. Catharine's would fit me to a hair: she and I are old messmates; and——what signifies talking, brother? she knows already the trim of my vessel, d'ye see.' He concluded with saying, he thought he wa'n't too old to learn; and, if sir Launcelot would take him in tow, as his tender, he would stand by him all weathers, and it should not cost his consort a farthing's expense.

The knight said, he did not think himself of consequence enough to have such a pupil, but should always be ready to give him his best advice; as a specimen of which, he exhorted him to weigh all the circumstances, and deliberate calmly and leisurely, before he actually engaged in such a boisterous profession; assuring him, that if at the end of three months his resolution should continue, he would take upon himself the office of his instructor. In the mean time, he gratified the hostess for his lodging, put on his armour, took leave of the company; and, mounting Bronzomarte, proceeded southerly, being attended by his squire Crabshaw, grumbling on the back of Gilbert.

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CHAP. VIII.—Which is within a hair's-breadth of proving highly interesting.

Leaving Captain Crowe and his nephew for the present, though they, and even the misanthrope, will reappear in due season, we are now obliged to attend the

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progress of the knight, who proceeded in a southerly direction, insensible of the storm that blew, as well as of the darkness, which was horrible. For some time, Crabshaw ejaculated curses in silence ; till at length, his anger gave way to his fear, which waxed so strong upon him, that he could no longer resist the desire of alleviating it, by entering into a conversation with his master. By way of introduction, he gave Gilbert the spur, directing him towards the flank of Bronzomarte, which he encountered with such a shock, that the knight was almost dismounted. When sir Launcelot, with some warmth, asked the reason of this attack, the squire replied in these words : ' The devil (God bless us !) mun be playing his pranks with Gilbert too, as sure as I 'm a living soul ! I 'se wager a teaster, the foul fiend has left the seaman, and got into Gilbert, that he has : when a has passed through an ass and a horse, I 'se marvel what beast a will get into next.' — ' Probably into a mule,' said the knight : ' in that case, you will be in some danger ; but I can at any time dispossess you with a horsewhip.' — ' Ay, ay,' answered Timothy, ' your honour has a mortal good hand at giving a flap with a fox's tail, as the saying is : 'tis a wonderment you did not try your hand on that there wiseacre that stole your honour's harness, and wants to be an arrant, with a murrain to 'un. Lord help his fool's head ! it becomes him as a sow does a cart-saddle.' — ' There is no guilt in infirmity,' said the knight : ' I punish the vicious only.' — ' I would your honour would punish Gilbert, then,' cried the squire ; ' for 'tis the most vicious twoad that ever I laid a leg over : but as to that same seafaring-man, what may his distemper be ?' — ' Madness,' answered sir Launcelot. ' Bodikins !' exclaimed the squire : ' I doubt as how other volks are leame of the same leg : but it an't vor such small gentry as he to be mad ; they mun leave that to their betters.' — ' You seem to hint at me, Crabshaw : do you really think I am mad ?' — ' I may say as how I have looked your honour in the mouth ; and a sorry dog should I be, if I did not know your humours as well as I know e'er a beast in the steable at Greavesbury-hall.' — ' Since you are so well acquainted with my

madness,' said the knight, 'what opinion have you of yourself, who serve and follow a lunatic?'—'I hope I han't served your honour for nothing, but I shall inherit some of your cast vagaries: when your honour is pleased to be mad, I should be very sorry to be found in my right senses. Timothy Crabshaw will never eat the bread of unthankfulness: it shall never be said of him that he was wiser than his measter: as for the matter of following a madman, we may say, your honour's face is made of a fiddle; every one that looks on you, loves you.' This compliment the knight returned, by saying, 'If my face is a fiddle, Crabshaw, your tongue is a fiddlestick that plays upon it: yet, your music is very disagreeable; you don't keep time.'—'Nor you neither, measter,' cried Timothy; 'or we shouldn't be here wandering about under cloud of night, like sheep-stealers, or evil spirits with troubled consciences.'

Here the discourse was interrupted by a sudden disaster, in consequence of which the squire uttered an inarticulate roar, that startled the knight himself, who was very little subject to the sensation of fear: but his surprise was changed into vexation, when he perceived Gilbert, without a rider, passing by, and kicking his heels with great agility. He forthwith turned his steed, and, riding back a few paces, found Crabshaw rising from the ground. When he asked what was become of his horse, he answered, in a whimpering tone, 'Horse! would I could once see him fairly carrion for hounds. For my part, I believe as how 'tis no horse, but a devil incarnate; and yet, I've been worse mounted, that I have. I'd like to have rid a horse that was foaled of an acorn.'

This accident happened in a hollow way, overshadowed with trees, one of which the storm had blown down, so that it lay over the road; and one of its boughs, projecting horizontally, encountered the squire as he trotted along in the dark. Chancing to hitch under his long chin, he could not disengage himself, but hung suspended like a flitch of bacon; while Gilbert, pushing forward, left him dangling, and, by his awkward gambols, seemed to be pleased with the joke. This capricious animal was not

retaken without the personal endeavours of the knight : for Crabshaw, absolutely refusing to budge a foot from his honour's side, he was obliged to alight, and fasten Bronzomarte to a tree : then they set out together, and, with some difficulty, found Gilbert with his neck stretched over a five-barred gate, snuffing up the morning air. The squire, however, was not remounted, without having first undergone a severe reprehension from his master, who upbraided him with his cowardice, threatened to chastise him on the spot, and declared, that he would divorce his dastardly soul from his body, should he ever be incommoded or affronted with another instance of his base-born apprehension. Though there was some risk in carrying on the altercation at this juncture, Timothy, having bound up his jaws, could not withstand the inclination he had to confute his master. He therefore, in a muttering accent, protested, that, if the knight would give him leave, he should prove, that his honour had tied a knot with his tongue, which he could not untie with all his teeth. 'How, caitiff!' cried sir Launcelot : 'presume to contend with me in argument?'—'Your mouth is scarce shut,' said the other, 'since you declared that a man was not to be punished for madness, because it was a distemper : now I will maintain, that cowardice is a distemper, as well as madness ; for nobody would be afraid if he could help it.'—'There is more logic in that remark,' resumed the knight, 'than I expected from your clodpate, Crabshaw ; but I must explain the difference between cowardice and madness. Cowardice, though sometimes the effect of natural imbecillity, is generally a prejudice of education, or bad habit, contracted from misinformation or misapprehension, and may certainly be cured by experience, and the exercise of reason : but this remedy cannot be applied in madness, which is a privation or disorder of reason itself.'—'So is cowardice, as I'm a living soul,' exclaimed the squire : 'don't you say a man is frightened out of his senses ? For my peart, measter, I can neither see nor hear, much less argufy when I'm in such a quandary : wherefore, I believe, odds bodikins ! that cowardice and madness are both dis-

temper, and differ no more than hot and cold fits of an ague. When it teakes your honour, you're all heat, and fire, and fury, Lord bless us! but, when it catches poor Tim, he's cold and dead-hearted; he sheakes and shivers like an aspen-leaf, that he does.'—'In that case,' answered the knight, 'I shall not punish you for the distemper, which you cannot help; but for engaging in a service exposed to perils, when you knew your own infirmity; in the same manner, as a man deserves punishment, who enlists himself for a soldier, while he labours under any secret disease.'—'At that rate,' said the squire, 'my bread is likely to be rarely buttered o'both sides, i'faith. But, I hope, as by the blessing of God I have run mad, so I shall in good time grow valiant, under your honour's precept and example.'

By this time a very disagreeable night was succeeded by a fair, bright morning, and a market-town appeared at the distance of three or four miles, when Crabshaw, having no longer the fear of hobgoblins before his eyes, and being moreover cheered by the sight of a place where he hoped to meet with comfortable entertainment, began to talk big, to expatiate on the folly of being afraid, and finally set all danger at defiance; when all of a sudden he was presented with an opportunity of putting in practice those new-adopted maxims. In an opening between two lanes, they perceived a gentleman's coach stopped by two highwaymen on horseback, one of whom advanced to reconnoitre and keep the coast clear, while the other exacted contribution from the travellers in the coach. He who acted as sentinel, no sooner saw our adventurer appearing from the lane, than he rode up with a pistol in hand, and ordered him to halt, on-pain of immediate death.

To this peremptory mandate the knight made no other reply than, charging him with such impetuosity, that he was unhorsed in a twinkling, and lay sprawling on the ground, seemingly sore bruised with his fall. Sir Launcelot, commanding Timothy to alight and secure the prisoner, couched his lance, and rode full speed at the other

highwayman, who was not a little disturbed at sight of such an apparition : nevertheless, he fired his pistol without effect ; and, clapping spurs to his horse, fled away at full gallop. The knight pursued him with all the speed that Bronzomarte could exert ; but the robber, being mounted on a swift hunter, kept him at a distance ; and, after a chase of several miles, escaped through a wood so entangled with coppice, that sir Launcelot thought proper to desist. He then, for the first time, recollected the situation in which he had left the other thief ; and, remembering to have heard a female shriek as he passed by the coach-window, resolved to return with all expedition, that he might make a proffer of his service to the lady, according to the obligation of knight-errantry. But he had lost his way ; and after an hour's ride, during which he had traversed many a field, and circled divers hedges, he found himself in the market-town aforementioned. Here the first object that presented itself to his eyes, was Crabshaw, on foot, surrounded by a mob, tearing his hair, stamping with his feet, and roaring out, in manifest distraction, ' Show me the mayor ; for the love of God, show me the mayor ! O Gilbert, Gilbert ! a murrain take thee, Gilbert ! sure thou wast foaled for my destruction ! '

From these exclamations, and the antic dress of the squire, the people, not without reason, concluded that the poor soul had lost his wits ; and the beadle was just going to secure him, when the knight interposed, and at once attracted the whole attention of the populace. Timothy, seeing his master, fell down on his knees, crying, ' The thief has run away with Gilbert : you may pound me into a peaste, as the saying is ; but now I 'se as mad as your worship, and an't afeard of the devil and all his works. ' Sir Launcelot, desiring the beadle would forbear, was instantly obeyed by that officer, who had no inclination to put the authority of his place in competition with the power of such a figure, armed at all points, mounted on a fiery steed, and ready for the combat. He ordered Crabshaw to attend him to the next inn, where he alighted ; then, taking him into a separate



apartment, demanded an explanation of the unconnected words he had uttered. The squire was in such agitation, that, with infinite difficulty, and by dint of a thousand different questions, his master learned the adventure to this effect :—Crabshaw, according to sir Launcelot's command, had alighted from his horse, and drawn his cutlass, in hope of intimidating the discomfited robber into a tame surrender, though he did not at all relish the nature of the service ; but the thief was neither so much hurt, nor so tame as Timothy had imagined. He started on his feet with his pistol still in his hand, and, presenting it to the squire, swore, with dreadful imprecations, that he would blow his brains out in an instant. Crabshaw, unwilling to hazard the trial of this experiment, turned his back, and fled with great precipitation ; while the robber, whose horse had run away, mounted Gilbert, and rode off across the country. It was at this period, that two footmen belonging to the coach, who had stayed behind to take their morning's whet at the inn where they had lodged, came up to the assistance of the ladies, armed with blunderbusses ; and the carriage proceeded, leaving Timothy alone in distraction and despair. He knew not which way to turn ; and was afraid of remaining on the spot, lest the robbers should come back and revenge themselves upon him for the disappointment they had undergone. In this distress, the first thought that occurred, was to make the best of his way to the town, and demand the assistance of the civil magistrate towards the retrieval of what he had lost ;—a design, which he executed in such a manner, as justly entailed upon him the imputation of lunacy.

While Timothy stood fronting the window, and answering the interrogations of his master, he suddenly exclaimed, ' Bodikins ! there's Gilbert ! ' and sprang into the street with incredible agility. There finding his strayed companion brought back by one of the footmen who attended the coach, he imprinted a kiss on his forehead ; and, hanging about his neck with the tears in his eyes, hailed his return with the following salutation : ' Art thou come back, my darling ? Ah Gilbert, Gilbert !

a pize upon thee! thou hadst like to have been a dear Gilbert to me! How couldst thou break the heart of thy old friend, who has known thee from a colt? Seven years next grass have I fed thee and bred thee; provided thee with sweet hay, delicate corn, and fresh litter, that thou mought lie warm, dry, and comfortable. Ha'nt I curry-combed thy carcass till thou wast as sleek as a sloe, and cherished thee as the apple of mine eye? For all that, thou hast played me a hundred dog's tricks, biting, kicking, and plunging, as if the devil was in thy body; and now thou couldst run away with a thief, and leave me to be flayed alive by measter. What canst thou say for thyself, thou cruel, hard-hearted, unchristian tuoad? To this tender expostulation, which afforded much entertainment to the boys, Gilbert answered not one word; but seemed altogether insensible to the caresses of Timothy, who forthwith led him into the stable. On the whole, he seems to have been an unsocial animal; for it does not appear that he ever contracted any degree of intimacy, even with Bronzomarte, during the whole course of their acquaintance and fellowship: on the contrary, he has been more than once known to signify his aversion by throwing out behind, and other eruptive marks of contempt for that elegant charger, who excelled him as much in personal merit, as his rider Timothy was outshone by his all-accomplished master. While the squire accommodated Gilbert in the stable, the knight sent for the footman who had brought him back; and, having presented him with a liberal acknowledgment, desired to know in what manner the horse had been retrieved.

The stranger satisfied him in this particular, by giving him to understand, that the highwayman, perceiving himself pursued across the country, plied Gilbert so severely with whip and spur, that the animal resented the usage; and being besides, perhaps, a little struck with remorse for having left his old friend Crabshaw, suddenly halted, and stood stock-still, notwithstanding all the stripes and tortures he underwent; or if he moved at all, it was in a retrograde direction. The thief, seeing all his endea-

vours ineffectual, and himself in danger of being overtaken, wisely quitted his acquisition, and fled into the bosom of a neighbouring wood.

Then the knight inquired about the situation of the lady in the coach, and offered himself as her guard and conductor; but was told that she was already safely lodged in the house of a gentleman at some distance from the road. He likewise learned that she was a person disordered in her senses, under the care and tuition of a widow lady, her relation; and that in a day or two they should pursue their journey northward to the place of her habitation. After the footman had been some time dismissed, the knight recollected that he had forgotten to ask the name of the person to whom he belonged; and began to be uneasy at this omission, which indeed was more interesting than he could imagine: for an explanation of this nature would, in all likelihood, have led to a discovery, that the lady in the coach was no other than Miss Aurelia Darnel, who seeing him unexpectedly in such an equipage and attitude as he passed the coach, (for his helmet was off) had screamed with surprise and terror, and fainted away. Nevertheless, when she recovered from her swoon, she concealed the real cause of her agitation; and none of her attendants were acquainted with the person of sir Launcelot.

The circumstances of the disorder, under which she was said to labour, shall be revealed in due course. In the mean time, our adventurer, though unaccountably affected, never dreamed of such an occurrence; but, being very much fatigued, resolved to indemnify himself for the loss of last night's repose; and this happened to be one of the few things, in which Crabshaw felt an ambition to follow his master's example.

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CHAP. IX.—Which may serve to show, that true patriotism is of no party.

The knight had not enjoyed his repose above two hours, when he was disturbed by such a variety of

noises, as might have discomposed a brain of the firmest texture. The rumbling of carriages, and the rattling of horses' feet on the pavement, was intermingled with loud shouts, and the noise of fiddle, French-horn, and bagpipe. A loud peal was heard ringing in the church-tower at some distance, while the inn resounded with clamour, confusion, and uproar.

Sir Launcelot, being thus alarmed, started from his bed, and running to the window, beheld a cavalcade of persons well-mounted, and distinguished by blue cockades. They were generally attired like jockeys, with gold-laced hats and buckskin breeches, and one of them bore a standard of blue silk, inscribed, in white letters, 'Liberty and the Landed Interest.' He who rode at their head was a jolly figure, of a florid complexion and round belly, seemingly turned of fifty, and, in all appearance, of a choleric disposition. As they approached the market-place, they waved their hats, huzza'd, and cried aloud, 'No foreign connexions! Old England for ever!' This acclamation, however, was not so loud or universal, but that our adventurer could distinctly hear a contrary cry from the populace of 'No slavery! No popish pretender!'—an insinuation, so ill relished by the cavaliers, that they began to ply their horsewhips among the multitude, and were, in their turn, saluted with a discharge or volley of stones, dirt, and dead cats, in consequence of which some teeth were demolished, and many surtouts defiled.

Our adventurer's attention was soon called off from this scene, to contemplate another procession of people on foot, adorned with bunches of orange ribbons, attended by a regular band of music, playing 'God save great George our king,' and headed by a thin, swarthy personage, of a sallow aspect and large goggling eyes, arched over with two thick semicircles of hair, or rather bristles, jet black, and frowzy. His apparel was very gorgeous, though his address was awkward: he was accompanied by the mayor, recorder, and heads of the corporation, in their formalities. His ensigns were known by the inscription, 'Liberty of Conscience and the Protestant Suc-

cession ;' and the people saluted him as he passed with repeated cheers, that seemed to prognosticate success. He had particularly ingratiated himself with the good women, who lined the street, and sent forth many ejaculatory petitions in his favour.

Sir Launcelot immediately comprehended the meaning of this solemnity : he perceived it was the prelude to the election of a member to represent the county in parliament, and he was seized with an eager desire to know the names and characters of the competitors. In order to gratify this desire, he made repeated application to the bell-rope that depended from the ceiling of his apartment ; but this produced nothing, except the repetition of the words ' Coming, sir,' which echoed from three or four different corners of the house. The waiters were so distracted by a variety of calls, that they stood motionless, in the state of the schoolman's ass between two bundles of hay, incapable of determining where they should first offer their attendance.

Our knight's patience was almost exhausted, when Crabshaw entered the room, in a very strange equipage : one half of his face appeared close shaved, and the other covered with lather, while the blood trickled in two rivulets from his nose, upon a barber's cloth that was tucked under his chin : he looked grim with indignation, and under his left arm carried his cutlass, unsheathed. Where he had acquired so much of the profession of knight-errantry we shall not pretend to determine ; but, certain it is, he fell on his knees before sir Launcelot, crying, with an accent of rage and distraction, ' In the name of St. George for England, I beg a boon, sir knight, and thy compliance I demand, before the peacock and the ladies.'

Sir Launcelot, astonished at this address, replied in a lofty strain, ' Valiant squire, thy boon is granted, provided it does not contravene the laws of the land and the constitutions of chivalry.' ' Then I crave leave,' answered Crabshaw,—' to challenge and defy to mortal combat that caitiff barber who has left me in this piteous condition ; and I vow by the peacock, that I will not

shave my beard, until I have shaved his head from his shoulders: so may I thrive in the occupation of an arrant squire.'

Before his master had time to inquire into particulars, they were joined by a decent man in boots, who was likewise a traveller, and had seen the rise and progress of Timothy's disaster. He gave the knight to understand, that Crabshaw had sent for a barber, and had already undergone one half of the operation, when the operator received the long-expected message from both the gentlemen who stood candidates at the election. The double summons was no sooner intimated to him, than he threw down his basin, and retired with precipitation, leaving the squire in the suds. Timothy, incensed at this desertion, followed him with equal celerity into the street, where he collared the shaver, and insisted on being entirely trimmed, on pain of the bastinado. The other, finding himself thus arrested, and having no time to spare for altercation, lifted up his fist, and discharged it upon the snout of Crabshaw with such force, that the unfortunate aggressor was fain to bite the ground, while the victor hastened away, in hope of touching the double wages of corruption.

The knight, being informed of these circumstances, told Timothy, with a smile, that he should have liberty to defy the barber; but, in the mean time, he ordered him to saddle Bronzomarte, and prepare for immediate service. While the squire was thus employed, his master engaged in conversation with the stranger, who happened to be a London dealer travelling for orders, and was well acquainted with the particulars which our adventurer wanted to know. It was from this communicative tradesman he learned, that the competitors were sir Valentine Quickset and Mr. Isaac Vanderpelft; the first a mere fox-hunter, who depended, for success in this election, upon his interest among the high-flying gentry; the other a stock-jobber and contractor, of foreign extract, not without a mixture of Hebrew blood, immensely rich, who was countenanced by his grace of —, and supposed to have distributed large sums in securing a ma-

jority of votes among the yeomanry of the county, possessed of small freeholds, and copyholders, a great number of which last resided in this borough. He said, these were generally dissenters and weavers; and that the mayor, who was himself a manufacturer, had received a very considerable order for exportation; in consequence of which, it was believed he would support Mr. Vanderpelt with all his influence and credit.

Sir Launcelot, roused at this intelligence, called for his armour; which being buckled on in a hurry, he mounted his steed, attended by Crabshaw on Gilbert, and rode immediately into the midst of the multitude by which the hustings were surrounded, just as sir Valentine Quickset began to harangue the people from an occasional theatre, formed of a plank supported by the upper board of the public stocks, and an inferior rib of a wooden cage, pitched also for the accommodation of petty delinquents.

Though the singular appearance of sir Launcelot at first attracted the eyes of all the spectators, yet they did not fail to yield attention to the speech of his brother knight, sir Valentine, which ran in the following strain: 'Gentlemen vreehoulders of this here county, I sha'n't pretend to meake a vine vLOURISHING speech: I'm a plain-spoken man, as you all know. I hope I shall always speak my maind without vear or vavour, as the zaying is: 'tis the way of the Quicksets: we are no upstarts nor voreigners, nor have we any Jewish blood in our veins: we have lived in this here neighbourhood time out of maind, as you all know, and possess an estate of vive thousand clear, which we spend at whoam among you, in old English hospitality; all my vorevathers have been parliament men, and I can prove that ne'er a one o'un gave a single vote for the court since the revolution. Vor my own peart, I value not the ministry three skips of a louse, as the zaying is. I ne'er knew but one minister that was an honest man; and vor all the rest, I care not if they were hanged as high as Haman, with a pox to 'un. I am, thank God, a vree-born, true-hearted Englishman, and a loyal, thof unworthy son of the church: vor all they have done vor H——r, I'd vain know

what they have done vor the church, with a vengeance : vor my own peart, I hate all voreigners, and voreign measures, whereby this poor nation is broken-backed with a dismal load of debt, and taxes rise so high, that the poor cannot get bread. Gentlemen vreehoulders of this county ; I value no minister a vig's end, d'ye see : if you will vavour me with your votes and interest, whereby I may be returned, I'll engage one half of my estate that I never cry yea to vour shillings in the pound ; but will cross the ministry in every thing, as in duty bound, and as becomes an honest vreehoulder in the ould interest : but, if you sell your votes and your country for hire, you will be detested in this here world, and damned in the next to all eternity : so I leave every man to his own conscience.'

This eloquent oration was received by his own friends with loud peals of applause ; which, however, did not discourage his competitor, who, confident of his own strength, ascended the rostrum, or, in other words, an old cask, set upright for the purpose. Having bowed all round to the audience, with a smile of gentle condescension, he told them, how ambitious he was of the honour to represent this county in parliament ; and how happy he found himself in the encouragement of his friends, who had so unanimously agreed to support his pretensions. He said, over and above the qualification he possessed among them, he had fourscore thousand pounds in his pocket, which he had acquired by commerce, the support of the nation, under the present happy establishment, in defence of which he was ready to spend the last farthing. He owned himself a faithful subject to his majesty king George, sincerely attached to the protestant succession, in detestation and defiance of a popish, and abjured, and outlawed pretender ; and declared that he would exhaust his substance and his blood, if necessary, in maintaining the principles of the glorious revolution. ' This,' cried he, ' is the solid basis and foundation upon which I stand.'

These last words had scarce proceeded from his mouth, when the head of the barrel or puncheon, on which he



stood, being frail and infirm, gave way; so that down he went with a crash, and in a twinkling disappeared from the eyes of the astonished beholders. The fox-hunters, perceiving his disaster, exclaimed, in the phrase and accent of the chase, 'Stole away! stole away!' and, with hideous vociferation, joined in the sylvan chorus with which the hunters halloo when the hounds are at fault.

The disaster of Mr. Vanderpelt was soon repaired by the assiduity of his friends, who disengaged him from the barrel in a trice, hoisted him on the shoulders of four strong weavers, and, resenting the unmannerly exultation of their antagonists, began to form themselves in order of battle. An obstinate fray would have undoubtedly ensued, had not their mutual indignation given way to their curiosity, at the motion of our knight, who had advanced into the middle between the two fronts, and, waving his hand as a signal for them to give attention, addressed himself to them with graceful demeanour, in these words: 'Countrymen, friends, and fellow-citizens, you are this day assembled to determine a point of the utmost consequence to yourselves and your posterity; a point, that ought to be determined by far other weapons than brutal force and factious clamour. You, the freemen of England, are the basis of that excellent constitution, which has long flourished, the object of envy and admiration. To you belongs the inestimable privilege of choosing a delegate, properly qualified, to represent you in the high court of parliament: this is your birth-right, inherited from your ancestors, obtained by their courage, and sealed with their blood: it is not only your birth-right, which you should maintain in defiance of all danger, but also a sacred trust, to be executed with the most scrupulous care and fidelity. The person whom you trust, ought not only to be endued with the most inflexible integrity, but should likewise possess a fund of knowledge, that may enable him to act as a part of the legislature. He must be well acquainted with the history, the constitution, and the laws of his country: he must understand the forms of business, the extent of the royal prerogative, the privilege of parliament, the detail of government, the nature

and regulation of the finances, the different branches of commerce, the politics that prevail, and the connexions that subsist, among the different powers of Europe; for, on all these subjects, the deliberations of a house of commons occasionally turn: but these great purposes will never be answered by electing an illiterate savage, scarce qualified, in point of understanding, to act as a country justice of the peace; a man, who has scarce ever travelled beyond the excursion of a fox-chase, whose conversation never rambles farther than his stable, his kennel, and his barn-yard; who rejects decorum as degeneracy, mistakes rusticity for independence, ascertains his courage by leaping over gates and ditches, and founds his triumph on feats of drinking; who holds his estate by a factious tenure; professes himself the blind slave of a party, without knowing the principles that gave it birth, or the motives by which it is actuated; and thinks that all patriotism consists in railing indiscriminately at ministers, and obstinately opposing every measure of the administration. Such a man, with no evil intentions of his own, might be used as a dangerous tool in the hands of a desperate faction, by scattering the seeds of disaffection, embarrassing the wheels of government, and reducing the whole kingdom to anarchy.'

Here the knight was interrupted by the shouts and acclamations of the Vanderpelftites, who cried aloud, 'Hear him! hear him! long life to the iron-cased orator.' This clamour subsiding, he prosecuted his harangue to the following effect:—

'Such a man as I have described may be dangerous from ignorance, but is neither so mischievous nor so detestable as the wretch who knowingly betrays his trust, and sues to be the hireling and prostitute of a weak and worthless minister; a sordid knave, without honour or principle, who belongs to no family whose example can reproach him with degeneracy; who has no country to command his respect, no friends to engage his affection, no religion to regulate his morals, no conscience to restrain his iniquity, and who worships no God but mammon: an insinuating miscreant, who undertakes for the

dirtyest work of the vilest administration; who practises national usury, receiving by wholesale the rewards of venality, and distributing the wages of corruption by retail.'

In this place our adventurer's speech, was drowned in the acclamation of the fox-hunters, who now triumphed in their turn, and hoicksed the speaker, exclaiming, 'Well, opened, Jowler! to 'un, to 'un, to 'un again, Sweetlips! hey, Merry, Whitefoot!' After a short interruption, he thus resumed his discourse:—

'When such a caitiff presents himself to you, like the devil, with a temptation in his hand, avoid him as if he were in fact the devil: it is not the offering of disinterested love; for what should induce him, who has no affections, to love you, to whose persons he is an utter stranger? Alas! it is not benevolence, but a bribe. He wants to buy you at one market, that he may sell you at another. Without doubt, his intention is to make an advantage of his purchase; and this aim he cannot accomplish, but by sacrificing, in some sort, your interest, your independency, to the wicked designs of a minister, as he can expect no gratification for the faithful discharge of his duty. But, even if he should not find an opportunity of selling you to advantage, the crime, the shame, the infamy, will still be the same in you, who, baser than the most abandoned prostitutes, have sold yourselves and your posterity for hire—for a paltry price, to be refunded with interest by some minister, who will indemnify himself out of your own pockets: for, after all, you are bought and sold with your own money. The miserable pittance you may now receive, is no more than a pitcher full of water thrown in to moisten the sucker of that pump which will drain you to the bottom. Let me therefore advise and exhort you, my countrymen, to avoid the opposite extremes of the ignorant clown and the designing courtier, and choose a man of honesty, intelligence, and moderation, who will ——'

The doctrine of moderation was a very unpopular subject in such an assembly; and, accordingly, they rejected it as one man. They began to think the stranger wanted to set up for himself; a supposition, that could not fail to

incense both sides equally, as they were both zealously engaged in their respective causes. The Whigs and the Tories joined against this intruder, who, being neither, was treated like a monster, or chimera, in politics. They hissed, they hooted, and they hallooed; they annoyed him with missiles of dirt, sticks, and stones; they cursed, they threatened, and reviled, till at length his patience was exhausted.

‘Ungrateful and abandoned miscreants!’ he said, ‘I spoke to you as men and Christians, as free-born Britons and fellow-citizens; but I perceive you are a pack of venal, infamous scoundrels, and I will treat you accordingly.’ So saying, he brandished his lance, and, riding into the thickest of the concourse, laid about him with such dexterity and effect, that the multitude was immediately dispersed, and he retired without farther molestation.

The same good fortune did not attend squire Crabshaw in his retreat. The ludicrous singularity of his features, and the half-mown crop of hair that bristled from one side of his countenance, invited some wags to make merry at his expense: one of them clapped a furze-bush under the tail of Gilbert, who, feeling himself thus stimulated *a posteriori*, kicked, and plunged, and capered in such a manner, that Timothy could hardly keep the saddle. In this commotion, he lost his cap and periwig; while the rabble pelted him in such a manner, that, before he could join his master, he looked like a pillar, or rather a pil-lory, of mud.

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CHAP. X.—Which shows, that he who plays at bowls, will sometimes meet with rubbers.

Sir Launcelot, boiling with indignation at the venality and faction of the electors, whom he had harangued to so little purpose, retired, with the most deliberate disdain, towards one of the gates of the town, on the outside of which his curiosity was attracted by a concourse of people, in the midst of whom stood Mr. Ferret, mounted upon a

stool, with a kind of satchel hanging round his neck, and a phial displayed in his right hand, while he held forth to the audience in a very vehement strain of elocution.

Crabshaw thought himself happily delivered when he reached the suburbs, and proceeded without halting; but his master mingled with the crowd, and heard the orator express himself to this effect: 'Very likely you may undervalue me and my medicine, because I don't appear upon a stage of rotten boards, in a shabby velvet coat and tie-periwig, with a foolish fellow in motley to make you laugh, by making wry faces; but I scorn to use these dirty arts for engaging your attention. These paltry tricks, *ad captandum vulgus*, can have no effect but on idiots; and if you are idiots, I don't desire you should be my customers. Take notice, I don't address you in the style of a mountebank, or a High German doctor; and yet the kingdom is full of mountebanks, empirics, and quacks. We have quacks in religion, quacks in physic, quacks in law, quacks in politics, quacks in patriotism, quacks in government: High German quacks, that have blistered, sweated, bled, and purged the nation into an atrophy. But this is not all: they have not only evacuated her into a consumption, but they have intoxicated her brain, until she has become delirious: she can no longer pursue her own interest, or, indeed, rightly distinguish it: like the people of Nineveh, she can hardly tell her right hand from her left; but, as a changeling, is dazzled and delighted by an *ignis fatuus*, a will o' the wisp, an exhalation from the vilest materials in nature, that leads her astray through Westphalian bogs and deserts, and will one day break her neck over some barren rock, or leave her sticking in some H——n pit or quagmire. For my part, if you have a mind to betray your country, I have no objection: in selling yourselves and your fellow-citizens, you only dispose of a pack of rascals, who deserve to be sold. If you sell one another, why should not I sell this elixir of long life, which, if properly used, will protract your days till you shall have seen your country ruined? I shall not pretend to disturb your understandings, which are none

of the strongest, with a hotch-potch of unintelligible terms, such as Aristotle's four principles of generation, unformed matter, privation, efficient and final causes : Aristotle was a pedantic blockhead, and still more knave than fool. The same censure we may safely put on that wiseacre Dioscorides, with his faculties of simples, his seminal, specific, and principal virtues ; and that crazy commentator Galen, with his four elementary qualities, his eight complexions, his harmonies, and discords : nor shall I expatiate on the alkahest of that mad scoundrel Paracelsus, with which he pretended to reduce flints into salts ; nor the *archæus* or *spiritus rector* of that visionary Van Helmont, his simple elementary water, his gas ferments, and transmutations ; nor shall I enlarge upon the salt, sulphur, and oil, the *acidum vagum*, the mercury of metals, and the volatilized vitriol of other modern chemists, a pack of ignorant, conceited, knavish rascals, that puzzle your weak heads with such jargon, just as a Germanized m——r throws dust in your eyes, by lugging in and ringing the changes on the balance of power, the protestant religion, and your allies on the continent ; acting like the juggler, who picks your pockets, while he dazzles your eyes, and amuses your fancy with twirling his fingers, and reciting the gibberish of hocus pocus ; for, in fact, the balance of power is a mere chimera ; as for the protestant religion, nobody gives himself any trouble about it ; and allies on the continent we have none, or, at least, none that would raise a hundred men to save us from perdition, unless we paid an extravagant price for their assistance.

But, to return to this here elixir of long life, I might embellish it with a great many high-sounding epithets ; but I disdain to follow the example of every illiterate vagabond, that, from idleness, turns quack, and advertises his nostrum in the public papers. I am neither a felonious dry-salter returned from exile, a hospital stump-turner, a decayed staymaker, a bankrupt printer, or insolvent debtor released by act of parliament : I do not pretend to administer medicines, without the least tincture of letters, or suborn wretches to perjure themselves

in false affidavits of cures that were never performed ; nor employ a set of led captains to harangue in my praise at all public places. I was bred regularly to the profession of chemistry, and have tried all the processes of alchymy ; and, I may venture to say, that this here elixir is, in fact, the *chrusion pepuromenon ek puros*, the visible, glorious, spiritual body, from whence all other beings derive their existence, as proceeding from their father, the sun ; and their mother, the moon : from the sun, as from a living and spiritual gold, which is mere fire ; consequently, the common and universal first-created mover, from whence all moveable things have their distinct and particular motions ; and also from the moon, as from the wife of the sun, and the common mother of all sublunary things : and, forasmuch as man is, and must be the comprehensive end of all creatures, and the microcosm, he is counselled, in the Revelations, to buy gold that is thoroughly fired, or rather pure fire, that he may become rich and like the sun ; as, on the contrary, he becomes poor, when he abuses the arsenical poison ; so that his silver, by the fire, must be calcined to a *caput mortuum*, which happens, when he will hold and retain the menstruum, out of which he partly exists, for his own property, and does not daily offer up the same in the fire of the sun, that the woman may be clothed with the sun, and become a sun, and thereby rule over the moon ; that is to say, that he may get the moon under his feet. Now, this here elixir, sold for no more than sixpence a phial, contains the essence of the alkahest, the archæus, the catholicon, the menstruum, the sun, moon, and, to sum up all in one word, is the true, genuine, unadulterated, unchangeable, immaculate, and specific *chrusion pepuromenon ek puros*.'

The audience were variously affected by this learned oration : some of those, who favoured the pretensions of the whig candidate, were of opinion, that he ought to be punished for his presumption in reflecting so scurrilously on ministers and measures : of this sentiment was our adventurer ; though he could not help admiring the courage of the orator, and owning, within himself, that he

had mixed some melancholy truths with his scurrility. Mr. Ferret would not have stood so long in his rostrum unmolested, had not he cunningly chosen his station immediately without the jurisdiction of the town, whose magistrates, therefore, could not take cognisance of his conduct: but application was made to the constable of the parish, while our nostrum-monger proceeded in his speech, the conclusion of which produced such an effect upon his hearers, that his whole cargo was immediately exhausted. He had just stepped down from his stool, when the constable, with his staff, arrived, and took him under his guidance. Mr. Ferret, on this occasion, attempted to interest the people in his behalf, by exhorting them to vindicate the liberty of the subject against such an act of oppression; but, finding them deaf to the tropes and figures of his elocution, he addressed himself to our knight, reminding him of his duty to protect the helpless and the injured, and earnestly soliciting his interposition.

Sir Launcelot, without making the least reply to his entreaties, resolved to see the end of this adventure; and, being joined by his squire, followed the prisoner at a distance, measuring back the ground he had travelled the day before, until he reached another small borough, where Ferret was housed in a common prison. While he sat a-horseback, deliberating on the next step he should take, he was accosted by the voice of Tom Clarke, who called, in a whimpering tone, through a window grated with iron, 'For the love of God, sir Launcelot, do, dear sir, be so good as to alight, and come up stairs: I have something to communicate of consequence to the community in general, and you in particular. Pray do, dear sir knight! I beg a boon in the name of St. Michael and St. George for England.'

Our adventurer, not a little surprised at this address, dismounted without hesitation, and, being admitted to the common jail, there found not only his old friend Tom, but also the uncle, sitting on a bench, with a woollen night-cap on his head, and a pair of spectacles on his nose, reading very earnestly in a book, which he after-



wards understood was entitled 'The Life and Adventures of Valentine and Orson.' The captain no sooner saw his great patron enter, than he rose, and received him with the salutation of 'What cheer, brother?' and, before the knight could answer, added these words: 'You see how the land lies; here have Tom and I been fast ashore these four and twenty hours; and this berth we have got by attempting to tow your galley, brother, from the enemy's harbour. Adds bobs! if we had this here fellow whoreson for a consort, with all our tackle in order, brother, we'd soon show 'em the topsail, slip our cable, and down with their barricadoes. But, howsomever, it don't signify talking: patience is a good stream-anchor, and will hold, as the saying is; but, d—n my—As for the matter of my boltsprit——. Hearn ye, hearn ye, brother, damned hard to engage with three at a time, one upon my bow, one upon my quarter, and one right a-head, rubbing and drubbing, lying athwart hawse, raking fore and aft, battering and grappling, and lashing and crashing: adds heart, brother, crash went the boltsprit, down came the round top, up with the dead lights: I saw nothing but the stars at noon; lost the helm of my seven senses, and down I broached upon my broadside.'

As Mr. Clarke rightly conceived that his uncle would need an interpreter, he began to explain these hints, by giving a circumstantial detail of his own and the captain's disaster. He told sir Launcelot, that, notwithstanding all his persuasions and remonstrances, captain Crowe insisted upon appearing in the character of a knight-errant; and with that view had set out from the public house on the morning that succeeded his vigil in the church; that, upon the highway, they had met with a coach, containing two ladies, one of whom seemed to be under great agitation; for, as they passed, she struggled with the other, thrust out her head at the window, and said something which he could not distinctly hear; that captain Crowe was struck with admiration of her unequalled beauty; and he, Tom, no sooner informed him who she was, than he resolved to set her at liberty, on the supposition that she was under restraint, and in distress; that he accord-

ingly unsheathed his cutlass, and, riding back after the coach, commanded the driver to bring to, on pain of death; that one of the servants, believing the captain to be a highwayman, presented a blunderbuss, and, in all probability, would have shot him on the spot; had not he (the nephew) rode up, and assured them the gentleman was *non compos*; that, notwithstanding this intimation, all the three attacked him with the but-ends of their horse-whips, while the coach drove on; and although he laid about him with great fury, at last brought him to the ground by a stroke on the temple: that Mr. Clarke himself then interposed in defence of his kinsman, and was also severely beaten: that two of the servants had obtained a warrant against the captain and his nephew, upon application to a justice of the peace, residing near the field of battle, who, without examination, committed them as idle vagrants, after having seized their horses and their money, on pretence of their being suspected for highwaymen: 'but, as there was no just cause of suspicion,' added he, 'I am of opinion, the justice is guilty of a trespass, and may be sued for *falsum imprisonmentum*, and considerable damages obtained; for you will please to observe, sir, no justice has a right to commit any person till after due examination: besides, we were not committed for an assault and battery, *audita querela*, nor as wandering lunatics by the statute, who, to be sure, may be apprehended by a justice's warrant, and locked up and chained, if necessary, or be sent to their last legal settlement; but we were committed as vagrants, and suspected highwaymen. Now, we do not fall under the description of vagrants; nor did any circumstance appear to support the suspicion of robbery: for, to constitute robbery, there must be something taken; but here nothing was taken but blows, and they were upon compulsion: even an attempt to rob, without any taking, is not felony, but a misdemeanour. To be sure, there is a taking in deed, and a taking in law: but still the robber must be in possession of a thing stolen; and we attempted to steal nothing, but to steal ourselves away. My uncle, indeed, would have released the young lady *vi et armis*, had his

strength been equal to his inclination ; and in so doing, I would have willingly lent my assistance, both from a desire to serve such a beautiful young creature, and also in regard to your honour ; for I thought I heard her call upon your name.'

'Ha! how! what! whose name? say, speak : heaven and earth!' cries the knight, with marks of the most violent emotion. Clarke, terrified at his looks, replied, 'I beg your pardon a thousand times : I did not say positively she did speak those words, but I apprehend she did speak them. Words, which may be taken or interpreted by law in a general or common sense, ought not to receive a strained or unusual construction ; and ambiguous words ——'—'Speak, or be dumb for ever!' exclaimed sir Launcelot, in a terrific tone, laying his hand on his sword ; 'What young lady, ha! what name did she call upon?' Clarke, falling upon his knees, answered, not without stammering, 'Miss Aurelia Darnel : to the best of my recollection, she called upon sir Launcelot Greaves.'—'Sacred powers!' cried our adventurer : 'which way did the carriage proceed?'

When Tom told him that the coach quitted the post-road, and struck away to the right, at full speed, sir Launcelot was seized with a pensive fit ; his head sunk upon his breast, and he mused in silence for several minutes, with the most melancholy expression on his countenance : then, recollecting himself, he assumed a more cheerful air, and asked several questions, with respect to the arms of the coach, and the liveries worn by the servants. It was in the course of this interrogation that he discovered he had actually conversed with one of the footmen who had brought back Crabshaw's horse ; a circumstance, that filled him with anxiety and chagrin, as he had omitted to inquire the name of his master, and the place to which the coach was travelling ; though, in all probability, had he made these inquiries, he would have received very little satisfaction, there being reason to think the servants were enjoined secrecy. The knight, in order to meditate on this unexpected adventure, sat down by his old friend, and entered into a reverie, which

lasted about a quarter of an hour, and might have continued longer, had it not been interrupted by the voice of Crabshaw, who bawled aloud, 'Look to it, my masters; as you brew you must drink; this shall be a dear day's work to some of you: vor my part I say nothing; the braying ass eats little grass; one barber shaves not so close, but another finds a few stubble; you wanted to catch a capon, and you've stole a cat: he that takes up his lodgings in a stable, must be contented to lie upon litter.'

The knight, desirous of knowing the cause that prompted Timothy to apophthegmatize in this manner, looked through the grate, and perceived the squire fairly set in the stocks, surrounded by a mob of people. When he called to him, and asked the reason of this disgraceful restraint, Crabshaw replied, 'There's no cake, but there's another of the same make; who never climbed, never fell; after clouds comes clear weather. 'Tis all along of your honour I've met with this preferment; no deservings of my own, but the interest of my master. Sir knight, if you will flay the justice, hang the constable, release your squire, and burn the town, your name will be famous in story; but, if you be content, I am thankful. Two hours are soon spent in such good company; in the mean time, look to 'un, jailor; there's a frog in the stocks.'

Sir Launcelot, incensed at this affront offered to his servant, advanced to the prison-door, but found it fast locked; and when he called to the turnkey, he was given to understand, that he himself was prisoner. Enraged at this intimation, he demanded at whose suit; and was answered, through the wicket, 'At the suit of the king, in whose name I will hold you fast, with God's assistance.'

The knight's looks now began to lighten, he rolled his eyes around, and snatching up an oaken bench, which three ordinary men could scarce have lifted from the ground, he, in all likelihood, would have shattered the door in pieces, had not he been restrained by the interposition of Mr. Clarke, who entreated him to have a little patience, assuring him he would suggest a plan, that would avenge him amply on the justice, without any breach of

the peace: 'I say, the justice,' added Tom; 'because it must be his doing. He is a little, petulant sort of a fellow, ignorant of the law, guilty of numberless irregularities, and, if properly managed, may, for this here act of arbitrary power, be not only cast in a swinging sum, but even turned out of the commission with disgrace.'

This was a very seasonable hint; in consequence of which, the bench was softly replaced, and captain Crowe deposited the poker, with which he had armed himself to second the efforts of sir Launcelot. They now, for the first time, perceived that Ferret had disappeared; and, upon inquiry, found that he was in fact the occasion of the knight's detention and the squire's disgrace.

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CHAP. XI.—Description of a modern magistrate.

Before the knight would take any resolution for extricating himself from his present embarrassment, he desired to be better acquainted with the character and circumstances of the justice by whom he had been confined, and likewise to understand the meaning of his own detention. To be informed in this last particular, he renewed his dialogue with the turnkey, who told him, through the grate, that Ferret no sooner perceived him in the jail, without his offensive arms, which he had left below, than he desired to be carried before the justice, where he had given information against the knight, as a violator of the public peace, who strolled about the country with unlawful arms, rendering the highways unsafe, encroaching upon the freedom of elections, putting his majesty's liege subjects in fear of their lives, and, in all probability, harbouring more dangerous designs under an affected cloak of lunacy. Ferret, upon this information, had been released, and entertained as an evidence for the king, and Crabshaw was put in the stocks as an idle stroller.

Sir Launcelot, being satisfied with these particulars, addressed himself to his fellow-prisoners, and begged they

would communicate what they knew respecting the worthy magistrate who had been so premature in the execution of his office. This request was no sooner signified, than a crew of naked wretches crowded round him, and, like a congregation of rooks, opened their throats all at once in accusation of justice Gobble. The knight was moved at this scene, which he could not help comparing, in his own mind, to what would appear upon a much more awful occasion; when the cries of the widow and the orphan, the injured and oppressed, would be uttered at the tribunal of an unerring Judge, against the villanous and insolent authors of their calamity.

When he had with some difficulty quieted their clamours, and confined his interrogation to one person of a tolerably decent appearance, he learned that justice Gobble, whose father was a tailor, had for some time served as a journeyman hosier in London, where he had picked up some law-terms, by conversing with hackney writers and attorneys' clerks of the lowest order: that, upon the death of his master, he had insinuated himself into the good graces of the widow, who took him for a husband, so that he became a person of some consideration, and saved money apace: that his pride, increasing with his substance, was re-enforced by the vanity of his wife, who persuaded him to retire from business, that they might live genteelly in the country: that his father dying, and leaving a couple of houses in this town, Mr. Gobble had come down with his lady to take possession, and liked the place so well as to make a more considerable purchase in the neighbourhood: that a certain peer, being indebted to him a large sum in the way of his business, and either unwilling or unable to pay the money, had compounded the debt, by inserting his name in the commission; since which period, his own insolence, and his wife's ostentation, had exceeded all bounds: that, in the exertion of his authority, he had committed a thousand acts of cruelty and injustice against the poorer sort of people, who were unable to call him to a proper account: that his wife domineered with a more ridiculous, though less pernicious usurpation, among the females of

the place : that, in a word, she was the subject of continual mirth, and he the object of universal detestation. Our adventurer, though extremely well disposed to believe what was said to the prejudice of Gobble, would not give entire credit to this description, without first inquiring into the particulars of his conduct. He therefore asked the speaker, what was the cause of his particular complaint. ' For my own part, sir,' said he, ' I lived in repute, and kept a shop in this here town, well furnished with a great variety of articles : all the people in the place were my customers ; but, what I and many others chiefly depended upon, was the extraordinary sale at two annual customary fairs, to which all the country people in the neighbourhood resorted to lay out their money. I had employed all my stock, and even engaged my credit, to procure a large assortment of goods for the Lammas market ; but having given my vote, in the election of a vestry-clerk, contrary to the interest of justice Gobble, he resolved to work my ruin : he suppressed the annual fairs, by which a great many people, especially publicans, earned the best part of their subsistence. The country people resorted to another town : I was overstocked with a load of perishable commodities ; and found myself deprived of the best part of my home customers by the ill-nature and revenge of the justice, who employed all his influence among the common people, making use of threats and promises, to make them desert my shop, and give their custom to another person, whom he settled in the same business under my nose. Being thus disabled from making punctual payments, my commodities spoiling, and my wife breaking her heart, I grew negligent and careless, took to drinking, and my affairs went to wreck. Being one day in liquor, and provoked by the fleers and taunts of the man who had set up against me, I struck him at his own door ; upon which I was carried before the justice, who treated me with such insolence, that I became desperate, and not only abused him in the execution of his office, but also made an attempt to lay violent hands upon his person. You know, sir, when a man is both drunk and

desperate, he cannot be supposed to have any command of himself. I was sent hither to jail : my creditors immediately seized my effects ; and, as they were not sufficient to discharge my debts, a statute of bankruptcy was taken out against me ; so that here I must lie, until they think proper to sign my certificate, or the parliament shall please to pass an act for the relief of insolvent debtors.'

The next person who presented himself in the crowd of accusers, was a meagre figure, with a green apron, who told the knight that he had kept a public-house in town for a dozen years, and enjoyed a good trade, which was, in a great measure, owing to a skittle-ground, in which the best people of the place diverted themselves occasionally : that justice Gobble, being disobliged at his refusing to part with a gelding, which he had bred for his own use, first of all shut up the skittle-ground ; but, finding the publican still kept his house open, he took care that he should be deprived of his license, on pretence that the number of alehouses was too great, and that this man had been bred to another employment. The poor publican, being thus deprived of bread, was obliged to try the stay-making business, to which he had served an apprenticeship ; but being very ill qualified for his profession, he soon fell to decay, and contracted debts ; in consequence of which he was now in prison, where he had no other support but what arose from the labour of his wife, who had gone to service.

The next prisoner who preferred his complaint against the unrighteous judge was a poacher, at whose practices justice Gobble had for some years connived, so as even to screen him from punishment, in consideration of being supplied with game gratis, till at length he was disappointed by accident. His lady had invited guests to an entertainment, and bespoken a hare, which the poacher undertook to furnish : he laid his snares accordingly over-night ; but they were discovered, and taken away by the gamekeeper of the gentleman to whom the ground belonged. All the excuses the poacher could make proved ineffectual in appeasing the resentment of



the justice and his wife, at being thus disconcerted. Measures were taken to detect the delinquent in the exercise of his illicit occupation : he was committed to safe custody ; and his wife, with five bantlings, was passed to her husband's settlement in a different part of the country.

A stout squat fellow, rattling his chains, had just taken up the ball of accusation, when sir Launcelot was startled with the appearance of a woman, whose looks and equipage indicated the most piteous distress. She seemed to be turned of the middle age, was of a lofty carriage, tall, thin, weather-beaten, and wretchedly attired : her eyes were inflamed with weeping, and her looks displayed that wildness and peculiarity which denote distraction. Advancing to sir Launcelot, she fell upon her knees, and, clasping her hands together, uttered the following rhapsody in the most vehement tone of affliction :—

‘Thrice potent, generous, and august emperor, here let my knees cleave to the earth, until thou shalt do me justice on that inhuman caitiff, Gobble. Let him disgorge my substance, which he has devoured : let him restore to my widowed arms my child, my boy, the delight of my eyes, the prop of my life, the staff of my sustenance, whom he has torn from my embrace, stolen, betrayed, sent into captivity, and murdered ! Behold these bleeding wounds upon his lovely breast ! see how they mangle his lifeless corse !—Horror ! give me my child, barbarians ! his head shall lie upon his Sukey’s bosom : she will embalm him with her tears. Ha ! plunge him in the deep ? shall my boy then float in a watery tomb ? Justice, most mighty emperor ! justice upon that villain who has ruined us all ! May Heaven’s dreadful vengeance overtake him ! may the keen storm of adversity strip him of all his leaves and fruit ! may peace forsake his mind, and rest be banished from his pillow ; so that all his days shall be filled with reproach and sorrow, and all his nights be haunted with horror and remorse ! may he be stung by jealousy without cause, and maddened by revenge without the means of execution ! may all his offspring be blighted

and consumed, like the mildewed ears of corn, except one, that shall grow up, to curse his old age, and bring his hoary head with sorrow to the grave, as he himself has proved a curse to me and mine!

The rest of the prisoners, perceiving the knight extremely shocked at her misery and horrid imprecation, removed her by force from his presence, and conveyed her to another room; while our adventurer underwent a violent agitation, and could not, for some minutes, compose himself so well as to inquire into the nature of this wretched creature's calamity. The shopkeeper, of whom he demanded this satisfaction, gave him to understand, that she was born a gentlewoman, and had been well educated: that she married a curate, who did not long survive his nuptials; and afterwards became the wife of one Oakly, a farmer, in opulent circumstances: that after twenty years cohabitation with her husband, he sustained such losses, by the distemper among the cattle, as he could not repair, and that this reverse of fortune was supposed to have hastened his death: that the widow, being a woman of spirit, determined to keep up and manage the farm, with the assistance of an only son, a very promising youth, who was already contracted in marriage with the daughter of another wealthy farmer. Thus the mother had a fair prospect of retrieving the affairs of her family, when all her hopes were dashed and destroyed, by a ridiculous pique which Mrs. Gobble conceived against the young farmer's sweetheart, Miss Susan Sedgemoor. This young woman, chancing to be at a country assembly, where the grave-digger of the parish acted as master of the ceremonies, was called out to dance before Miss Gobble, who happened to be there present also with her mother. The circumstance was construed into an unpardonable affront by the justice's lady, who abused the director, in the most opprobrious terms, for his insolence and ill-manners; and, retiring in a storm of passion, vowed revenge against the saucy minx, who had presumed to vie in gentility with Miss Gobble. The justice entered into her resentment; the grave-digger lost his place; and Sukey's lover, young Oakly, was

pressed for a soldier. Before his mother could take any steps for his discharge, he was hurried away to the East Indies by the industry and contrivance of the justice. Poor Sukey wept and pined, until she fell into a consumption. The forlorn widow, being thus deprived of her son, was overwhelmed with grief to such a degree, that she could no longer manage her concerns : every thing went backwards ; she ran in arrears with her landlord ; and the prospect of bankruptcy aggravated her affliction, while it added to her incapacity. In the midst of these disastrous circumstances, news arrived that her son Greaves had lost his life in a sea-engagement with the enemy, and these tidings almost instantly deprived her of her reason. Then the landlord seized for his rent ; and she was arrested at the suit of justice Gobble, who had bought up one of her debts, in order to distress her, and now pretended that her madness was feigned.

When the name of Greaves was mentioned, our adventurer started, and changed colour ; and, now the story was ended, asked, with marks of eager emotion, if the name of the woman's first husband was not Wilford. When the prisoner answered in the affirmative, he rose up, and, striking his breast, ' Good Heaven ! ' cried he ; ' the very woman who watched over my infancy, and even nourished me with her milk ! She was my mother's humble friend. Alas, poor Dorothy ! how would your old mistress grieve to see her favourite in this miserable condition ! ' While he pronounced these words, to the astonishment of the hearers, a tear stole softly down each cheek. Then he desired to know if the poor lunatic had any intervals of reason ; and was given to understand, that she was always quiet, and generally supposed to have the use of her senses, except when she was disturbed by some extraordinary noise, or when any person touched upon her misfortune, or mentioned the name of her oppressor ; in all which cases she started out into extravagance and frenzy : they likewise imputed great part of her disorder to the want of quiet, proper food, and necessaries, with which she was but poorly supplied by the cold hand of chance charity. Our adventurer was ex-

ceedingly affected by the distress of this woman, whom he resolved to relieve; and in proportion as his commiseration was excited, his resentment rose against the miscreant, who seemed to have insinuated himself into the commission of the peace on purpose to harass and oppress his fellow-creatures. Thus animated, he entered into consultation with Mr. Thomas Clarke concerning the steps he should take, first for their deliverance, and then for prosecuting and punishing the justice. In result of this conference, the knight called aloud for the jailer, and demanded to see a copy of his commitment, that he might know the cause of his imprisonment, and offer bail; or, in case that should be refused, move for a writ of Habeas Corpus. The jailer told him, the copy of the writ should be forthcoming; but after he had waited some time, and repeated the demand before witnesses, it was not yet produced. Mr. Clarke then, in a solemn tone, gave the jailer to understand, that an officer, refusing to deliver a true copy of the commitment-warrant, was liable to the forfeiture of one hundred pounds for the first offence; and for the second, to a forfeiture of twice that sum, besides being disabled from executing his office.

Indeed, it was no easy matter to comply with sir Launcelot's demand; for no warrant had been granted, nor was it now in the power of the justice to remedy this defect, as Mr. Ferret had taken himself away privately, without having communicated the name and designation of the prisoner;—a circumstance, the more mortifying to the jailer, as he perceived the extraordinary respect which Mr. Clarke and the captain paid to the knight, and was now fully convinced that he would be dealt with according to law. Disordered with these reflections, he imparted them to the justice, who had in vain caused search to be made for Ferret, and was now extremely well inclined to set the knight and his friends at liberty, though he did not at all suspect the quality and importance of our adventurer. He could not, however, resist the temptation of displaying the authority of his office; and therefore ordered the prisoners to be brought before

his tribunal, that, in the capacity of a magistrate, he might give them a severe reproof and proper caution, with regard to their future behaviour.

They were accordingly led through the street in procession, guarded by the constable and his gang; followed by Crabshaw, who had by this time been released from the stocks; and surrounded by a crowd of people attracted by curiosity. When they arrived at the justice's house, they were detained for some time in the passage: then a voice was heard, commanding the constable to bring in the prisoners, and they were introduced to the hall of audience, where Mr. Gobble sat in judgment, with a crimson velvet night-cap on his head. On his right hand appeared his lady, puffed up with the pride of her husband's office, fat, frowzy, and not over clean; well-stricken in years, without the least vestige of an agreeable feature, having a rubicund nose, ferret eyes, and imperious aspect. The justice himself was a little, affected, pert prig, who endeavoured to solemnize his countenance, by assuming an air of consequence, in which pride, impudence, and folly were strangely blended. He aspired at nothing so much as the character of an able spokesman; and took all opportunities of holding forth at vestry and quarter-sessions, as well as in the administration of his office in private. He would not, therefore, let slip this occasion of exciting the admiration of his hearers; and, in an authoritative tone, thus addressed our adventurer:—

‘The laws of this land has provided—I says, as how provision is made by the laws of this here land, in reverence to delinquents and manefactors, whereby the king's peace is upholden by we magistrates, who represents his majesty's person, better than in e'er a contagious nation under the sun: but, howsomever, that there king's peace, and this here magistrate's authority, cannot be adequately and identically upheld, if so be as how criminals escapes unpunished. Now, friend, you must be confidential in your own mind as how you are a notorious criminal, who have trespassed again the laws on divers occasions and importunities. If I had a mind to exercise the rigour of

the law, according to the authority wherewith I am vested, you and your companions in iniquity would be severely punished by the statute; but we magistrates has a power to litigate the sewerity of justice, and so I am contented that you should be mercifully dealt withal, and even dismissed.'

To this harangue the knight replied, with a solemn and deliberate accent, ' If I understand your meaning aright, I am accused of being a notorious criminal; but, nevertheless, you are contented to let me escape with impunity. If I am a notorious criminal, it is the duty of you, as a magistrate, to bring me to condign punishment; and if you allow a criminal to escape unpunished, you are not only unworthy of a place in the commission, but become accessory to his guilt, and, to all intents and purposes, *socius criminis*. With respect to your proffered mercy, I shall decline the favour; nor do I deserve any indulgence at your hands: for, depend upon it, I shall show no mercy to you in the steps I intend to take for bringing you to justice. I understand that you have been long hackneyed in the ways of oppression, and I have seen some living monuments of your inhumanity: of that hereafter. I myself have been detained in prison, without cause assigned: I have been treated with indignity, and insulted by jailers and constables; led through the streets like a felon, as a spectacle to the multitude, obliged to dance attendance in your passage, and afterwards branded with the name of a notorious criminal. I now demand to see the information, in consequence of which I was detained in prison; the copy of the warrant of commitment or detainer, and the face of the person by whom I was accused. I insist upon a compliance with these demands, as the privileges of a British subject; and if it is refused, I shall seek redress before a higher tribunal.'

The justice seemed to be not a little disturbed at this peremptory declaration; which, however, had no other effect upon his wife, but that of enraging her choler, and inflaming her countenance. ' Sirrah! sirrah!' cried she, ' do you dares to insult a worshipful magistrate on the bench? Can you deny that you are a vagrum, and a di-

latory sort of a person? Ha'n't the man with the satchel made an affidavit of it? If I was my husband, I'd lay you fast by the heels for your resumption, and ferk you with a primineery into the bargain, unless you could give a better account of yourself—I would.'

Gobble, encouraged by this fillip, resumed his petulance, and proceeded in this manner:—'Heark ye, friend, I might, as Mrs. Gobble very justly observes, trounce you for your audacious behaviour; but I scorn to take such advantages: howsomever, I shall make you give an account of yourself and your companions; for I believes as how you are all in a gang, and all in a story, and perhaps you may be found one day all in a cord. What are you, friend? What is your station and degree?'—'I am a gentleman,' replied the knight. 'Ay, that is English for a sorry fellow,' said the justice: 'every idle vagabond, who has neither home nor habitation, trade nor profession, designs himself a gentleman. But I must know how you live.'—'Upon my means.'—'What are your means?'—'My estate.'—'Whence does it arise?'—'From inheritance.'—'Your estate lies in brass, and that you have inherited from nature; but do you inherit lands and tenements?'—'Yes.'—'But they are neither here nor there, I doubt. Come, come, friend, I shall bring you about presently.' Here the examination was interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Fillet the surgeon, who, chancing to pass, and seeing a crowd about the door, went in to satisfy his curiosity.

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CHAP. XII.—Which shows there are more ways to kill a dog than hanging.

Mr. Fillet no sooner appeared in the judgment-chamber of justice Gobble, than captain Crowe, seizing him by the hand, exclaimed, 'Body o'me! Doctor, thou'rt come up in the nick of time to lend us a hand in putting about. We're a little in the stays here: but howsomever we've got a good pilot, who knows the coast, and can weather

the point, as the saying is. As for the enemy's vessel, she has had a shot or two already athwart her forefoot; the next, I do suppose, will strike the hull, and then you'll see her taken all aback.' The doctor, who perfectly understood his dialect, assured him he might depend upon his assistance; and, advancing to the knight, accosted him in these words: 'Sir Launcelot Greaves, your most humble servant. When I saw a crowd at the door, I little thought of finding you within, treated with such indignity: yet I can't help being pleased with an opportunity of proving the esteem and veneration I have for your person and character: you will do me a particular pleasure in commanding my best services.'

Our adventurer thanked him for this instance of his friendship, which he told him he would use without hesitation; and desired he would procure immediate bail for him and his two friends, who had been imprisoned contrary to law, without any cause assigned. During this short dialogue, the justice, who had heard of sir Launcelot's family and fortune, though an utter stranger to his person, was seized with such pangs of terror and compunction, as a grovelling mind may be supposed to have felt in such circumstances; and they seemed to produce the same unsavoury effects, that are so humorously delineated by the inimitable Hogarth in the print of Felix on his tribunal, done in the Dutch style. Nevertheless, seeing Fillet retire to execute the knight's commands, he recollected himself so far as to tell the prisoners there was no occasion to give themselves any farther trouble, for he would release them without bail or mainprize. Then, discarding all the insolence from his features, and assuming an aspect of the most humble adulation, he begged the knight ten thousand pardons for the freedoms he had taken, which were entirely owing to his ignorance of sir Launcelot's quality. 'Yes, I'll assure you, sir,' said the wife, 'my husband would have bit off his tongue, rather than say black is the white of your eye, if so be he had known your capacity. Thank God, we have been used to deal with gentlefolks, and many's the good pound we have lost by them: but what of that? Sure we know.



how to behave to our betters. Mr. Gobble, thanks be to God! can defy the whole world to prove that he ever said an uncivil word, or did a rude thing to a gentleman, knowing him to be a person of fortune. Indeed, as to your poor gentry and riff-raff, your tag-rag and bobtail, or such vulgar, scoundrelly people, he has always behaved like a magistrate, and treated them with the rigour of authority.'—'In other words,' said the knight, 'he has tyrannized over the poor, and connived at the vices of the rich: your husband is little obliged to you for this confession, woman.'—'Woman!' cried Mrs. Gobble, empurpled with wrath, and fixing her hands on her sides by way of defiance, 'I scorn your words. Marry come up! woman! quotha: no more a woman than your worship.' Then bursting into tears, 'Husband,' continued she, 'if you had the soul of a louse, you would not suffer me to be abused at this rate: you would not sit still on the bench, and hear your spouse called such contemptible epitaphs. Who cares for his title and his knightship? You and I, husband, knew a tailor that was made a knight: but, thank God! I have noblemen to stand by me, with their privileges and beroguetifs.'

At this instant Mr. Fillet returned with his friend, a practitioner in the law, who freely offered to join in bailing our adventurer, and the other two prisoners, for any sum that should be required. The justice, perceiving the affair began to grow more and more serious, declared that he would discharge the warrants, and dismiss the prisoners. Here Mr. Clarke interposing, observed, that against the knight no warrant had been granted, nor any information sworn to; consequently, as the justice had not complied with the form of proceeding directed by statute, the imprisonment was *coram non judice*, and void. 'Right, sir,' said the other lawyer; 'if a justice commits a felon for trial, without binding over the prosecutor to the assizes, he shall be fined.'—'And again,' cried Clarke, 'if a justice issues a warrant for commitment, where there is no accusation, action will lie against the justice.'—'Moreover,' replied the stranger, 'if a justice of peace is guilty of any misdemeanour in his office, information

lies against him in *Banco Regis*, where he shall be punished by fine and imprisonment.'—'And besides,' resumed the accurate Tom, 'the same court will grant an information against a justice of peace, on motion, for sending even a servant to the house of correction, or common jail, without sufficient cause.'—'True,' exclaimed the other limb of the law; 'and, for contempt of law, attachment may be had against justices of peace in *Banco Regis*. A justice of peace was fined a thousand marks for corrupt practices.' With these words, advancing to Mr. Clarke, he shook him heartily by the hand, with the appellation of brother, saying, 'I doubt the justice has got into a cursed *hovel*.' Mr. Gobble himself seemed to be of the same opinion: he changed colour several times during the remarks which the lawyers had made; and now, declaring that the gentlemen were at liberty, begged, in the most humble phrase, that the company would eat a bit of mutton with him, and after dinner the affair might be amicably compromised. To this proposal our adventurer replied, in a grave and resolute tone, 'If your acting in the commission as a justice of the peace concerned my own particular only, perhaps I should wave any farther inquiry, and resent your insolence no other way but by silent contempt. If I thought the errors of your administration proceeded from a good intention, defeated by want of understanding, I should pity your ignorance, and, in compassion, advise you to desist from acting a part for which you are so ill qualified: but the preposterous conduct of such a man deeply affects the interest of the community, especially that part of it, which, from its helpless situation, is the more entitled to our protection and assistance. I am moreover convinced, that your misconduct is not so much the consequence of an uninformed head, as the poisonous issue of a malignant heart, devoid of humanity, inflamed with pride, and rankling with revenge. The common prison of this little town is filled with the miserable objects of your cruelty and oppression. Instead of protecting the helpless, restraining the hands of violence, preserving the public tranquillity, and acting as a father to the poor, according to the

intent and meaning of that institution of which you are an unworthy member, you have distressed the widow and the orphan, given a loose to all the insolence of office, embroiled your neighbours by fomenting suits and animosities, and played the tyrant among the indigent and forlorn. You have abused the authority with which you were invested, entailed a reproach upon your office, and, instead of being revered as a blessing, you are detested as a curse among your fellow-creatures. This, indeed, is generally the case of low fellows, who are thrust into the magistracy without sentiment, education, or capacity. Among other instances of your iniquity, there is now in prison, an unhappy woman, infinitely your superior in the advantages of birth, sense, and education, whom you have, even without provocation, persecuted to ruin and distraction, after having illegally and inhumanly kidnapped her only child, and exposed him to violent death in a foreign land. Ah, caitiff! if you were to forego all the comforts of life, distribute your means among the poor, and do the severest penance that ever priestcraft prescribed for the rest of your days, you could not atone for the ruin of that hapless family; a family, through whose sides you cruelly and perfidiously stabbed the heart of an innocent young woman, to gratify the pride and diabolical malice of that wretched, low-bred woman, who now sits at your right hand as the associate of your power and presumption. O! if such a despicable reptile shall annoy mankind with impunity; if such a despicable miscreant shall have it in his power to do such deeds of inhumanity and oppression, what avails the law? Where is our admired constitution, the freedom, the security of the subject, the boasted humanity of the British nation? Sacred Heaven! if there was no human institution to take cognizance of such atrocious crimes, I would listen to the dictates of eternal justice, and, arming myself with the right of nature, exterminate such villains from the face of the earth!

These last words he pronounced in such a strain, while his eyes lightened with indignation, that Gobble and his wife underwent the most violent agitation; the consta-

ble's teeth chattered in his head, the jailer trembled, and the whole audience was overwhelmed with consternation.

After a short pause, sir Launcelot proceeded in a milder strain: 'Thank Heaven, the laws of this country have exempted me from the disagreeable task of such an execution. To them we shall have immediate recourse, in three separate actions against you for false imprisonment; and any other person, who has been injured by your arbitrary and wicked proceedings, in me shall find a warm protector, until you shall be expunged from the commission with disgrace, and have made such retaliation as your circumstances will allow for the wrongs you have done the community.'

In order to complete the mortification and terror of the justice, the lawyer, whose name was Fenton, declared, that, to his certain knowledge, these actions would be re-enforced with divers prosecutions for corrupt practices, which had lain dormant until some person of courage and influence should take the lead against justice Gobble, who was the more dreaded as he acted under the patronage of lord Sharpington. By this time fear had deprived the justice and his help-mate of the faculty of speech: they were indeed almost petrified with dismay, and made no effort to speak; when Mr. Fillet, in the rear of the knight, as he retired with his company, took his leave of them in these words:—'And now, Mr. Justice, to dinner, with what appetite you may.'

Our adventurer, though warmly invited to Mr. Fenton's house, repaired to a public inn, where he thought he should be more at his ease; fully determined to punish and depose Gobble from his magistracy; to effect a general jail-delivery of all the debtors whom he had found in confinement; and, in particular, to rescue poor Mrs. Oakly from the miserable circumstances in which she was involved.

In the mean time, he insisted upon entertaining his friends at dinner, during which many sallies of sea wit and good-humour passed between captain Crowe and doctor Fillet, which last had just returned from a neighbouring village, whither he was summoned to fish a man's

yard-arm, which had snapped in the slings. Their enjoyment, however, was suddenly interrupted by a loud scream from the kitchen, whither sir Launcelot immediately sprung with equal eagerness and agility. There he saw the landlady, who was a woman in years, embracing a man dressed in a sailor's jacket, while she exclaimed, 'It is thy own flesh and blood, so sure as I'm a living soul. Ah! poor Greaves, poor Greaves, many a poor heart has grieved for thee!' To this salutation, the youth replied, 'I'm sorry for that, mistress. How does poor mother? how does Sukey Sedgemoor?'

The good woman of the house could not help shedding tears at these interrogations; while sir Launcelot, interposing, said, not without emotion, 'I perceive you are the son of Mrs. Oakly. Your mother is in a bad state of health; but in me you will find a real parent.' Perceiving that the young man eyed him with astonishment, he gave him to understand, that his name was Launcelot Greaves,

Oakly no sooner heard these words pronounced, than he fell upon his knees, and, seizing the knight's hand, kissed it eagerly, crying, 'God for ever bless your honour: I am your name-son, sure enough—but what of that? I can earn my bread, without being beholden to any man.'

When the knight raised him up, he turned to the woman of the house, saying, 'I want to see mother; I'm afraid as how times are hard with her; and I have saved some money for her use.' This instance of filial duty brought tears into the eyes of our adventurer, who assured him his mother should be carefully attended, and want for nothing; but that it would be very improper to see her at present, as the surprise might shock her too much, considering that she believed him dead. 'Ay, indeed,' cried the landlady, 'we were all of the same opinion, being, as the report went, that poor Greaves Oakly was killed in battle.'—'Lord, mistress,' said Oakly, 'there wa'n't a word of truth in it, I'll assure you. What, d'ye think I'd tell a lie about the matter? Hurt I was, to be sure; but that don't signify; we gave 'em as good as they

brought, and so parted. Well; if so be I can't see mother, I'll go and have some chat with Sukey. What d'ye look so glum for? she an't married, is she?'—'No, no,' replied the woman, 'not married; but almost heart-broken. Since thou wast gone, she has done nothing but sighed, and wept, and pined herself into a decay. I'm afraid thou hast come home too late to save her life.'

Oakly's heart was not proof against this information. Bursting into tears, he exclaimed, 'O my dear, sweet, gentle Sukey! have I then lived to be the death of her whom I loved more than the whole world?' He would have gone instantly to her father's house; but was restrained by the knight and his company, who had now joined him in the kitchen. The young man was seated at table, and gave them to understand, that the ship to which he belonged having arrived in England, he was indulged with a month's leave to see his relations; and that he had received about fifty pounds in wages and prize-money. After dinner, just as they began to deliberate upon the measures to be taken against Gobble, that gentleman arrived at the inn, and humbly craved admittance. Fillet, struck with a sudden idea, retired into another apartment with the young farmer; while the justice, being admitted to the company, declared that he came to propose terms of accommodation: he accordingly offered to ask pardon of sir Launcelot in the public papers, and pay fifty pounds to the poor of the parish, as an atonement for his misbehaviour, provided the knight and his friends would grant him a general release. Our adventurer told him, he would willingly wave all personal concessions; but, as the case concerned the community, he insisted upon his leaving off acting in the commission, and making satisfaction to the parties he had injured and oppressed. This declaration introduced a discussion, in the course of which the justice's petulance began to revive; when Fillet, entering the room, told them he had a reconciling measure to propose, if Mr. Gobble would for a few minutes withdraw. He rose up immediately, and was shown into the room which Fillet had prepared for his reception. While he sat musing on this untoward ad-

venture, so big with disgrace and disappointment, young Oakly, according to the instructions he had received, appeared all at once before him, pointing to a ghastly wound, which the doctor had painted on his forehead. The apparition no sooner presented itself to the eyes of Gobble, than, taking it for granted it was the spirit of the young farmer whose death he had occasioned, he roared aloud, 'Lord have mercy upon us!' and fell insensible on the floor. There, being found by the company, to whom Fillet had communicated his contrivance, he was conveyed to bed, where he lay some time, before he recovered the perfect use of his senses. He then earnestly desired to see the knight, and assured him he was ready to comply with his terms, inasmuch as he believed he had not long to live. Advantage was immediately taken of this salutary disposition. He bound himself not to act as a justice of the peace, in any part of Great Britain, under the penalty of five thousand pounds: he burned Mrs. Oakly's note; paid the debts of the shopkeeper; undertook to compound those of the publican, and to settle him again in his business; and, finally, discharged them all from prison, paying the dues out of his own pocket. These steps being taken with peculiar eagerness, he was removed to his own house, where he assured his wife he had seen a vision that prognosticated his death; and had immediate recourse to the curate of the parish for spiritual consolation.

The most interesting part of the task that now remained, was to make the widow Oakly acquainted with her good fortune, in such a manner as might least disturb her spirits, already but too much discomposed. For this purpose they chose the landlady, who, after having received proper directions how to regulate her conduct, visited her in prison the same evening. Finding her quite calm, and her reflection perfectly restored, she began with exhorting her to put her trust in Providence, which would never forsake the cause of the injured widow and fatherless: she promised to assist and befriend her on all occasions, as far as her abilities would reach: she gradually turned the conversation upon the family of Greaves; and, by

degrees, informed her, that sir Launcelot, having learned her situation, was determined to extricate her from all her troubles. Perceiving her astonished, and deeply affected at this intimation, she artfully shifted the discourse, recommended resignation to the divine will, and observed that this circumstance seemed to be an earnest of farther happiness. 'O! I'm incapable of receiving more,' cried the disconsolate widow, with streaming eyes; 'yet I ought not to be surprised at any blessing that flows from that quarter: the family of Greaves were always virtuous, humane, and benevolent. This young gentleman's mother was my dear lady and benefactress: he himself was suckled at these breasts. O! he was the sweetest, comeliest, best-conditioned babe! I loved not my own Greaves with greater affection; but he, alas! is now no more!'—'Have patience, good neighbour,' said the landlady of the White Hart: 'that is more than you have any right to affirm. All that you know of the matter is by common report, and common report is commonly false: besides, I can tell you, I have seen a list of the men that were killed in admiral P——'s ship, when he fought the French in the East Indies, and your son was not in the number.' To this intimation she replied, after a considerable pause, 'Don't, my good neighbour, don't feed me with false hope. My poor Greaves too certainly perished in a foreign land;—yet he is happy. Had he lived to see me in this condition, grief would soon have put a period to his days.'—'I tell you, then,' cried the visitant, 'he is not dead. I have seen a letter, that mentions his being well since the battle. You shall come along with me; you are no longer a prisoner; but shall live at my house comfortably, till your affairs are settled to your wish.'

The poor widow followed her in silent astonishment, and was immediately accommodated with necessaries. Next morning her hostess proceeded with her in the same cautious manner, until she was assured that her son had returned. Being duly prepared, she was blessed with a sight of poor Greaves, and fainted away in his arms.

We shall not dwell upon this tender scene, because it



is but of a secondary concern in the history of our knight-errant: let it suffice to say, their mutual happiness was unspeakable. She was afterwards visited by sir Launcelot, whom she no sooner beheld, than, springing forwards with all the eagerness of maternal affection, she clasped him to her breast, crying, 'My dear child! my Launcelot! my pride! my darling! my kind benefactor! This is not the first time I have hugged you in these arms. O! you are the very image of sir Everhard in his youth: but you have got the eyes, the complexion, the sweetness and complacency of my dear and ever-honoured lady.' This was not the strain of hireling praise, but the genuine tribute of esteem and admiration. As such, it could not but be agreeable to our hero, who undertook to procure Oakly's discharge, and settle him in a comfortable farm on his own estate.

In the mean time, Greaves went with a heavy heart to the house of farmer Sedgemoor, where he found Sukey, who had been prepared for his reception, in a transport of joy, though very weak, and greatly emaciated. Nevertheless, the return of her sweetheart had such a happy effect on her constitution, that, in a few weeks, her health was perfectly restored.

This adventure of our knight was crowned with every happy circumstance that could give pleasure to a generous mind. The prisoners were released, and reinstated in their former occupations. The justice performed his articles from fear; and afterwards turned over a new leaf from remorse. Young Oakly was married to Sukey, with whom he received a considerable portion. The new-married couple found a farm ready stocked for them on the knight's estate; and the mother enjoyed a happy retreat, in the character of housekeeper at Greavesbury-hall.

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CHAP. XIII.—In which our knight is tantalized with a transient glimpse of felicity.

The success of our adventurer, which we have particularized in the last chapter, could not fail of enhancing

his character, not only among those who knew him, but also among the people of the town, to whom he was an utter stranger. The populace surrounded the house, and testified their approbation in loud huzzas. Captain Crowe was more than ever inspired with veneration for his admired patron, and more than ever determined to pursue his footsteps in the road of chivalry : Fillet, and his friend the lawyer, could not help conceiving an affection, and even a profound esteem for the exalted virtue, the person, and the accomplishments of the knight, dashed as they were with a mixture of extravagance and insanity. Even sir Launcelot himself was elevated to an extraordinary degree of self-complacency on the fortunate issue of his adventure, and became more and more persuaded, that a knight-errant's profession might be exercised, even in England, to the advantage of the community. The only person of the company who seemed unanimated with the general satisfaction, was Mr. Thomas Clarke. He had, not without good reason, laid it down as a maxim, that knight-errantry and madness were synonymous terms ; and that madness, though exhibited in the most advantageous and agreeable light, could not change its nature, but must continue a perversion of sense to the end of the chapter. He perceived the additional impression which the brain of his uncle had sustained, from the happy manner in which the benevolence of sir Launcelot had so lately operated ; and began to fear it would be, in a little time, quite necessary to have recourse to a commission of lunacy, which might not only disgrace the family of the Crowes, but also tend to invalidate the settlement which the captain had already made in favour of our young lawyer.

Perplexed with these cogitations, Mr. Clarke appealed to our adventurer's own reflection. He expatiated upon the bad consequences that would attend his uncle's perseverance in the execution of a scheme so foreign to his faculties ; and entreated him, for the love of God, to divert him from his purpose, either by arguments or authority ; as, of all mankind, the knight alone had gained such an ascendancy over his spirits, that he would listen to his

exhortations with respect and submission. Our adventurer was not so mad, but that he saw and owned the rationality of these remarks. He readily undertook to employ all his influence with Crowe, to dissuade him from his extravagant design; and seized the first opportunity of being alone with the captain, to signify his sentiments on this subject. 'Captain Crowe,' said he, 'you are then determined to proceed in the course of knight-errantry?'—'I am,' replied the seaman, 'with God's help, d'ye see, and the assistance of wind and weather.'—'What dost thou talk of wind and weather?' cried the knight, in an elevated tone of affected transport: 'without the help of Heaven, indeed, we are all vanity, imbecillity, weakness, and wretchedness; but, if thou art resolved to embrace the life of an errant, let me not hear thee so much as whisper a doubt, a wish, a hope, or sentiment, with respect to any other obstacle, which wind or weather, fire or water, sword or famine, danger or disappointment, may throw in the way of thy career. When the duty of thy profession calls, thou must singly rush upon innumerable hosts of armed men: thou must storm the breach in the mouth of batteries loaded with death and destruction, while, every step thou movest, thou art exposed to the horrible explosion of subterranean mines, which, being sprung, will whirl thee aloft in air, a mangled corse, to feed the fowls of heaven; thou must leap into the abyss of dismal caves and caverns, replete with poisonous toads and hissing serpents; thou must plunge into seas of burning sulphur; thou must launch upon the ocean in a crazy bark, when the foaming billows roll mountains high, when the lightning flashes, the thunder roars, and the howling tempest blows, as if it would commix the jarring elements of air and water, earth and fire, and reduce all nature to the original anarchy of chaos. Thus involved, thou must turn thy prow full against the fury of the storm, and stem the boisterous surge to thy destined port, though at the distance of a thousand leagues: thou must——'—'Avast, avast, brother!' exclaimed the impatient Crowe: 'you've got into the high latitudes, d'ye see: if so be as you spank it away at that rate, adad, I can't continue in tow:

we must cast off the rope, or 'ware timbers. As for your 'osts and breeches, and hurling aloft, d'ye see, your caves and caverns, whistling tuoads and serpents, burning brimstone and foaming billows, we must take our hap; I value 'em not a rotten ratline; but, as for sailing in the wind's eye, brother, you must give me leave,—no offence, I hope; I pretend to be a thorough-bred seaman, d'ye see; and I'll be d—d if you, or e'er an arrant that broke biscuit, ever sailed in a three-mast vessel within five points of the wind, allowing for variation and leeway. No, no, brother, none of your tricks upon travellers; I a'n't now to learn my compass.'—'Tricks!' cried the knight, starting up, and laying his hand on the pommel of his sword; 'what! suspect my honour?'

Crowe, supposing him to be really incensed, interrupted him with great earnestness, saying, 'Nay, don't—what a pize! adds buntlines! I didn't go to give you the lie, brother, smite my limbs: I only said as how to sail in the wind's eye was impossible.'—'And I say unto thee,' resumed the knight, 'nothing is impossible to a true knight-errant, inspired and animated by love.'—'And I say unto thee,' hallooed Crowe, 'if so be as how Love pretends to turn his hawse-holes to the wind, he's no seaman, d'ye see, but a snotty-nosed, lubberly boy, that knows not a cat from a capstan, a-don't.'—'He that does not believe that Love is an infallible pilot, must not embark upon the voyage of chivalry; for, next to the protection of Heaven, it is from love that the knight derives all his prowess and glory. The bare name of his mistress invigorates his arm; the remembrance of her beauty infuses in his breast the most heroic sentiments of courage; while the idea of her chastity hedges him round like a charm, and renders him invulnerable to the sword of his antagonist. A knight without a mistress is a mere nonentity, or, at least, a monster in nature, a pilot without compass, a ship without rudder, and must be driven to and fro upon the waves of discomfiture and disgrace.'—'An' that be all,' replied the sailor, 'I told you before as how I've got a sweetheart, as true a hearted girl

as ever swung in canvas. What tho' she may have started a hoop in rolling, that signifies nothing; I'll warrant her tight as a nut-shell.'—'She must, in your opinion, be a paragon either of beauty or virtue: now, as you have given up the last, you must uphold her charms unequalled, and her person without a parallel.'—'I do, I do uphold she will sail upon a parallel as well as e'er a frigate that was rigged to the northward of fifty.'—'At that rate, she must rival the attractions of her whom I adore; but that, I say, is impossible: the perfections of my Aurelia are altogether supernatural; and, as two suns cannot shine together in the same sphere with equal splendor, so I affirm, and will prove with my body, that your mistress, in comparison with mine, is as a glow-worm to the meridian sun, a rush-light to the full moon, or a stale mackerel's eye to a pearl of orient.'—'Heark ye, brother, you might give good words, however: an' we once fall a jawing, d'ye see, I can heave out as much bilge-water as another; and, since you besmear my sweetheart Besselia, I can as well bedaub your mistress Aurelia, whom I value no more than old junk, pork slush, or stinking stock-fish.'—'Enough, enough; such blasphemy shall not pass unchastised. In consideration of our having fed from the same table, and maintained together a friendly, though short intercourse, I will not demand the combat before you are duly prepared. Proceed to the first great town, where you can be furnished with horse and harnessing, with arms offensive and defensive; provide a trusty squire; assume a motto and device; declare yourself a son of chivalry; and proclaim the excellence of her who rules your heart. I shall fetch a compass; and where-soever we may chance to meet, let us engage with equal arms in mortal combat, that shall decide and determine this dispute.'

So saying, our adventurer stalked with solemnity into another apartment; while Crowe, being sufficiently irritated, snapped his fingers, in token of defiance. Honest Crowe thought himself scurvily used by a man, whose friendship he had cultivated with such humility and ve-

neration; and, after an incoherent ejaculation of sea oaths, went in quest of his nephew, in order to make him acquainted with this unlucky transaction.

In the mean time, sir Launcelot, having ordered supper, retired into his own chamber, and gave a loose to the most tender emotions of his heart. He recollected all the fond ideas, which had been excited in the course of his correspondence with the charming Aurelia: he remembered, with horror, the cruel letter he had received from that young lady, containing a formal renunciation of his attachment, so unsuitable to the whole tenor of her character and conduct: he revolved the late adventure of the coach, and the declaration of Mr. Clarke, with equal eagerness and astonishment; and was seized with the most ardent desire of unravelling a mystery so interesting to the predominant passion of his heart. All these mingled considerations produced a kind of ferment in the economy of his mind, which subsided into a profound reverie, compounded of hope and perplexity.

From this trance he was waked by the arrival of his squire, who entered the room with the blood trickling over his nose, and stood before him without speaking. When the knight asked, whose livery was that he wore, he replied, 'Tis your honour's own livery: I received it on your account, and hope as how you will quit the score.' Then he proceeded to inform his master, that two officers of the army, having come into the kitchen, insisted upon having for their supper the victuals sir Launcelot had bespoken; and that he, the squire, objecting to the proposal, one of them had seized the poker, and basted him with his own blood; that when he told them he belonged to a knight-errant, and threatened them with the vengeance of his master, they cursed and abused him, calling him Sancho Panza, and such dogs' names; and bade him tell his master Don Quixote, that, if he made any noise, they would confine him to his cage, and lie with his mistress Dulcinea. 'To be sure, sir,' said he, 'they thought you as great a nincompoop as your squire; trim tram; like master like man; but I hope as how you will give them a Rowland for their Oliver.'

'Miscreant,' cried the knight, 'you have provoked the gentlemen with your impertinence, and they have chastised you as you deserve. I tell thee, Crabshaw, they have saved me the trouble of punishing thee with my own hands: and well it is for thee, sinner as thou art, that they themselves have performed the office; for, had they complained to me of thy insolence and rusticity, by heaven! I would have made thee an example to all the impudent squires upon the face of the earth. Hence, then; avaunt, caitiff! Let his majesty's officers, who are, perhaps, fatigued with hard duty in the service of their country, comfort themselves with the supper which was intended for me, and leave me undisturbed to my own meditations.'

Timothy did not require a repetition of this command, which he forthwith obeyed, growling within himself, that, thenceforward, he should let every cuckold wear his own horns; but he could not help entertaining some doubts with respect to the courage of his master, who, he supposed, was one of those Hectors who have their fighting days, but are not at all times equally prepared for the combat.

The knight, having taken a slight repast, retired to his repose; and had, for some time, enjoyed a very agreeable slumber, when he was startled by a knocking at his chamber-door. 'I beg your honour's pardon,' said the landlady, 'but there are two uncivil persons in the kitchen, who have well nigh turned my whole house topsy-turvy. Not contented with laying violent hands on your honour's supper, they want to be rude to two young ladies who are just arrived, and have called for a post-chaise to go on. They are afraid to open their chamber-door to get out; and the young lawyer is like to be murdered for taking the ladies' part.'

Sir Launcelot, though he refused to take notice of the insult which had been offered to himself, no sooner heard of the distress of the ladies, than he started up, huddled on his clothes, and, girding his sword to his loins, advanced, with a deliberate pace, to the kitchen, where he perceived Thomas Clarke warmly engaged in altercation

with a couple of young men dressed in regimentals, who, with a peculiar air of arrogance and ferocity, treated him with great insolence and contempt. Tom was endeavouring to persuade them, that, in the constitution of England, the military was always subservient to the civil power; and that their behaviour to a couple of helpless young women was not only unbecoming gentlemen, but expressly contrary to the law; inasmuch as they might be sued for an assault, on an action of damages.

To this remonstrance the two heroes in red replied, by a volley of dreadful oaths, intermingled with threats, which put the lawyer in some pain for his ears. While one thus endeavoured to intimidate honest Tom Clarke, the other thundered at the door of the apartment to which the ladies had retired, demanding admittance; but received noother answer than a loud shriek. Our adventurer, advancing to this uncivil champion, accosted him thus, in a grave and solemn tone:—‘Assuredly, I could not have believed, except upon the evidence of my own senses, that persons, who have the appearance of gentlemen, and bear his majesty’s honourable commission in the army, could behave so wide of the decorum due to society, of a proper respect to the laws, of that humanity which we owe to our fellow-creatures, and that delicate regard for the fair sex which ought to prevail in the breast of every gentleman, and which, in particular, dignifies the character of a soldier. To whom shall that weaker, though more amiable part of the creation, fly for protection, if they are insulted and outraged by those, whose more immediate duty it is to afford them security and defence from injury and violence? What right have you, or any man upon earth, to excite riot in a public inn, which may be deemed a temple sacred to hospitality; to disturb the quiet of your fellow-guests, some of them, perhaps, exhausted by fatigue, some of them invaded by distemper; to interrupt the king’s lieges in their course of journeying upon their lawful occasions? Above all, what motive, but wanton barbarity, could prompt you to violate the apartment, and terrify the tender hearts of two helpless young ladies, travelling no doubt upon some cruel



emergency, which compels them, unattended, to encounter in the night the dangers of the highway?"

'Heark ye, Don Bethlem,' said the captain, strutting up, and cocking his hat in the face of our adventurer, 'you may be as mad as e'er a straw-crowned monarch in Moorfields, for aught I care; but d—n me! don't you be saucy; otherwise I shall dub your worship with a good stick across your shoulders.'—'How! petulant boy,' cried the knight, 'since you are so ignorant of urbanity, I will give you a lesson that you shall not easily forget.' So saying, he unsheathed his sword, and called upon the soldier to draw in his defence.

The reader may have seen the physiognomy of a stockholder at Jonathan's, when the rebels were at Derby; or the features of a bard, when accosted by a bailiff; or the countenance of an alderman, when his banker stops payment: if he has seen any of these phenomena, he may conceive the appearance that was now exhibited by the visage of the ferocious captain, when the naked sword of sir Launcelot glanced before his eyes. Far from attempting to produce his own, which was of unconscionable length, he stood motionless as a statue, staring with the most ghastly look of terror and astonishment. His companion, who partook of his panic, seeing matters brought to a very serious crisis, interposed, with a crest-fallen countenance, assuring sir Launcelot they had no intention to quarrel, and what they had done was entirely for the sake of the frolic.

'By such frolics,' cried the knight, 'you become nuisances to society, bring yourselves into contempt, and disgrace the corps to which you belong. I now perceive the truth of the observation, that cruelty always resides with cowardice. My contempt is changed into compassion; and as you are probably of good families, I must insist upon this young man's drawing his sword, and acquitting himself in such a manner as may screen him from the most infamous censure which an officer can undergo.'—'Lack-a-day, sir!' said the other: 'we are no officers, but 'prentices to two London haberdashers, travelling for orders. Captain is a good travelling name; and we have

dressed ourselves like officers, to procure more respect upon the road.'

The knight said he was very glad, for the honour of the service, to find they were impostors; though they deserved to be chastised, for arrogating to themselves an honourable character, which they had not spirit to sustain.

These words were scarce pronounced, when Mr. Clarke, approaching one of the bravadoes, who had threatened to crop his ears, bestowed such a benediction on his jaw, as he could not receive without immediate humiliation; while Timothy Crabshaw, smarting from his broken head and his want of supper, saluted the other with a Yorkshire hug, that laid him across the body of his companion. In a word, the two pseudo-officers were very roughly handled for their presumption, in pretending to act characters for which they were so ill qualified.

While Clarke and Crabshaw were thus laudably employed, the two young ladies passed through the kitchen so suddenly, that the knight had only a transient glimpse of their backs, and they disappeared before he could possibly make a tender of his services. The truth is, they dreaded nothing so much as their being discovered, and took the first opportunity of gliding into the chaise, which had been for some time waiting in the passage.

Mr. Clarke was much more disconcerted than our adventurer by their sudden escape: he ran with great eagerness to the door; and, perceiving they were flown, returned to sir Launcelot, saying, 'Lord bless my soul, sir! didn't you see who it was?'—'Ah! how!' exclaimed the knight, reddening with alarm: 'who was it?'—'One of them,' replied the lawyer, 'was Dolly, our landlady's daughter at the Black Lion: I knew her when first she lighted, notwithstanding her being neatly dressed in a green Joseph, which, I'll assure you, sir, becomes her remarkably well: I'd never desire to see a prettier creature. As for the other, she's a very genteel woman; but whether old or young, ugly or handsome, I can't pretend to say; for she was masked. I had just time to

salute Dolly, and ask a few questions ; but all she could tell me was, that the masked lady's name was Miss Meadows, and that she, Dolly, was hired as her waiting-woman.'

When the name of Meadows was mentioned, sir Launcelot, whose spirits had been in violent commotion, became suddenly calm and serene, and he began to communicate to Clarke the dialogue which had passed between him and captain Crowe ; when the hostess, addressing herself to our errant, ' Well,' said she, ' I have had the honour to accommodate many ladies of the first fashion at the White Hart, both young and old, proud and lowly, ordinary and handsome ; but such a miracle as Miss Meadows I never yet did see. Lord, let me never thrive, but I think she is of something more than a human creature ! O, had your honour but set eyes on her, you would have said it was a vision from heaven, a cherubim of beauty : for my part, I can hardly think it was any thing but a dream : then so meek, so mild, so good-natured and generous ! I say, blessed is the young woman who tends upon such a heavenly creature : and—poor, dear young lady ! she seems to be under grief and affliction ; for the tears stole down her lovely cheeks, and looked for all the world like orient pearl.'

Sir Launcelot listened attentively to the description, which reminded him of his dear Aurelia ; and, sighing bitterly, withdrew to his own apartment.

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CHAP. XIV.—Which shows,—

That a man can't always sip,  
When the cup is at his lip.

Those, who have felt the doubts, the jealousies, the resentments, the humiliations, the hopes, the despair, the impatience, and, in a word, the infinite disquiets of love, will be able to conceive the sea of agitation on which our adventurer was tossed, all night long, without repose or intermission. Sometimes he resolved to employ all

his industry and address in discovering the place in which Aurelia was sequestered, that he might rescue her from the supposed restraint to which she had been subjected. But, when his heart beat high with the anticipation of this exploit, he was suddenly invaded, and all his ardour checked, by the remembrance of that fatal letter, written and signed by her own hand, which had divorced him from all hope, and first unsettled his understanding. The emotions waked by this remembrance were so strong, that he leaped from the bed, and, the fire being still burning in the chimney, lighted a candle, that he might once more banquet his spleen by reading the original billet, which, together with the ring he had received from Miss Darnel's mother, he kept in a small box, carefully deposited within his portmanteau. This being instantly unlocked, he unfolded the paper, and recited the contents, in these words:—

‘Sir,

‘Obliged as I am by the passion you profess, and the eagerness with which you endeavour to give me the most convincing proof of your regard, I feel some reluctance in making you acquainted with a circumstance, which, in all probability, you will not learn without some disquiet. But the affair is become so interesting, I am compelled to tell you, that, however agreeable your proposals may have been to those, whom I thought it my duty to please by every reasonable concession, and howsoever you may have been flattered by the seeming complacency with which I have heard your addresses, I now find it absolutely necessary to speak in a decisive strain; to assure you, that, without sacrificing my own peace, I cannot admit a continuation of your correspondence; and that your regard for me will be best shown by your desisting from a pursuit, which is altogether inconsistent with the happiness of

‘AURELIA DARNEL.’

Having pronounced aloud the words that composed this dismission, he hastily replaced the cruel scroll; and, being too well acquainted with the hand, to harbour the least doubt of its being genuine, threw himself into his bed in a transport of despair, mingled with resentment; during the predominancy of which, he determined to proceed in the career of adventure, and endeavour to forget the unkindness of his mistress amidst the avocations of knight-errantry. Such was the resolution that governed his thoughts, when he rose in the morning, ordered Crab-

shaw to saddle Bronzomarte, and demanded a bill of his expense. Before these orders could be executed, the good woman of the house, entering his apartment, told him, with marks of concern, that the poor young lady, Miss Meadows, had dropped her pocket-book in the next chamber, where it was found by the hostess, who now presented it unopened.

Our knight, having called in Mrs. Oakly and her son as witnesses, unfolded the book, without reading one syllable of the contents, and found in it five bank-notes, amounting to two hundred and thirty pounds. Perceiving, at once, that the loss of this treasure might be attended with the most embarrassing consequences to the owner, and reflecting that this was a case which demanded the immediate interposition and assistance of chivalry, he declared, that he himself would convey it safely into the hands of Miss Meadows; and desired to know the road she had pursued, that he might set out in quest of her, without a moment's delay. It was not without some difficulty that this information was obtained from the post-boy, who had been enjoined secrecy by the lady, and even gratified with a handsome reward for his promised discretion. The same method was used to make him disgorge his trust: he undertook to conduct sir Launcelot, who hired a post-chaise for despatch, and immediately departed, after having directed his squire to follow his track with the horses.

Yet, whatever haste he made, it is absolutely necessary, for the reader's satisfaction, that we should outstrip the chaise, and visit the ladies before his arrival. We shall, therefore, without circumlocution, premise, that Miss Meadows was no other than that paragon of beauty and goodness,—the all-accomplished Miss Aurelia Darnel. She had, with that meekness of resignation peculiar to herself, for some years submitted to every species of oppression, which her uncle's tyranny of disposition could plan, and his unlimited power of guardianship execute, till, at length, it rose to such a pitch of despotism, as she could not endure. He had projected a match between

his niece and one Philip Sycamore, Esq.; a young man who possessed a pretty considerable estate in the north country, who liked Aurelia's person, but was enamoured of her fortune, and had offered to purchase Antony's interest and alliance with certain concessions, which could not be but agreeable to a man of loose principles, who would have found it a difficult task to settle the accounts of his wardship.

According to the present estimate of matrimonial felicity, Sycamore might have found admittance as a future son-in-law in any private family in the kingdom. He was by birth a gentleman, tall, straight, and muscular, with a fair, sleek, unmeaning face, that promised more simplicity than ill-nature: his education had not been neglected; and he inherited an estate of five thousand a year. Miss Darnel, however, had penetration enough to discover and despise him, as a strange composition of rapacity and profusion, absurdity and good sense, bashfulness and impudence, self-conceit and diffidence, awkwardness and ostentation, insolence and good-nature, rashness and timidity. He was continually surrounded and preyed upon by a certain vermin called led-captains and buffoons, who showed him in leading-strings like a sucking giant, rifled his pockets without ceremony, ridiculed him to his face, traduced his character, and exposed him in a thousand ludicrous attitudes for the diversion of the public; while all the time, he knew their knavery, saw their drift, detested their morals, and despised their understanding. He was so infatuated by indolence of thought, and communication with folly, that he would have rather suffered himself to be led into a ditch with company, than be at the pains to go over a bridge alone; and involved himself in a thousand difficulties, the natural consequences of an error in the first concoction, which, though he plainly saw it, he had not resolution enough to avoid.

Such was the character of squire Sycamore, who professed himself the rival of sir Launcelot Greaves in the good graces of Miss Aurelia Darnel. He had, in this pursuit, persevered with more constancy and fortitude than he ever exerted in any other instance. Being generally

needy from extravagance, he was stimulated by his wants, and animated by his vanity, which was artfully instigated by his followers, who hoped to share the spoils of his success. These motives were re-enforced by the incessant and eager exhortations of Antony Darnel, who, seeing his ward in the last year of her minority, thought there was no time to be lost in securing his own indemnification, and snatching his niece for ever from the hopes of sir Launcelot, whom he now hated with redoubled animosity. Finding Aurelia deaf to all remonstrances, proof against ill-usage, and resolutely averse to the proposed union with Sycamore, he endeavoured to detach her thoughts from sir Launcelot, by forging tales to the prejudice of his constancy and moral character; and, finally, by recapitulating the proofs and instances of his distraction, which he particularized with the most malicious exaggerations.

In spite of all his arts, he found it impracticable to surmount her objections to the proposed alliance, and therefore changed his battery. Instead of transferring her to the arms of his friend, he resolved to detain her in his own power by a legal claim, which would invest him with the uncontrolled management of her affairs: this was a charge of lunacy; in consequence of which he hoped to obtain a commission, to secure a jury to his wish, and be appointed sole committee of her person, as well as steward on her estate, of which he would then be heir apparent. As the first steps towards the execution of this honest scheme, he had subjected Aurelia to the superintendency and direction of an old duenna, who had been formerly the procuress of his pleasures; and hired a new set of servants, who were given to understand, at their first admission, that the young lady was disordered in her brain.

An impression of this nature is easily preserved among servants, when the master of the family thinks his interest is concerned in supporting the imposture. The melancholy produced from her confinement, and the vivacity of her resentment under ill-usage, were, by the address of Antony, and the prepossession of his domestics, perverted into the effects of insanity; and the same inter-

pretation was strained upon her most indifferent words and actions. The tidings of Miss Darnel's disorder were carefully circulated in whispers, and soon reached the ears of Mr. Sycamore, who was not at all pleased with the information. From his knowledge of Antony's disposition, he suspected the truth of the report; and, unwilling to see such a prize ravished, as it were, from his grasp, he, with the advice and assistance of his myrmidons, resolved to set the captive at liberty, in full hopes of turning the adventure to his own advantage; for he argued in this manner:—'If she be in fact *compos mentis*, her gratitude will operate in my behalf, and even prudence will advise her to embrace the proffered asylum from the villany of her uncle: if she is really disordered, it will be no great difficulty to deceive her into a marriage, and then I become her trustee of course.'

The plan was well conceived; but Sycamore had not discretion enough to keep his own counsel. From weakness and vanity, he blabbed the design, which, in a little time, was communicated to Antony Darnel, and he took his precautions accordingly. Being infirm in his own person, and consequently unfit for opposing the violence of some desperadoes, whom he knew to be the satellites of Sycamore, he prepared a private retreat for his ward at the house of an old gentleman, the companion of his youth, whom he had imposed upon with the fiction of her being disordered in her understanding, and amused with the story of a dangerous design upon her person. Thus cautioned and instructed, the gentleman had gone with his own coach and servants to receive Aurelia and her governante at a third house, to which she had been privately removed from her uncle's habitation; and in this journey it was that she had been so accidentally protected from the violence of the robbers by the interposition and prowess of our adventurer.

As he did not wear his helmet in that exploit, she recognised his features as he passed the coach, and, struck with the apparition, shrieked aloud. She had been assured by her guardian, that his design was to convey her to her own house; but perceiving, in the sequel, that the



carriage struck off upon a different road, and finding herself in the hands of strangers, she began to dread a much more disagreeable fate, and conceived doubts and ideas that filled her tender heart with horror and affliction. When she expostulated with the duenna, she was treated like a changeling, admonished to be quiet, and reminded that she was under the direction of those, who would manage her with a tender regard to her own welfare, and the honour of her family. When she addressed herself to the old gentleman, who was not much subject to the emotions of humanity, and besides firmly persuaded that she was deprived of her reason, he made no answer; but laid his finger on his mouth, by way of enjoining silence.

This mysterious behaviour aggravated the fears of the poor, hapless young lady; and her terrors waxed so strong, that when she saw Tom Clarke, whose face she knew, she called aloud for assistance, and even pronounced the name of his patron sir Launcelot Greaves, which she imagined might stimulate him the more to attempt something for her deliverance.

The reader has already been informed in what manner the endeavours of Tom and his uncle miscarried. Miss Darnel's new keeper having, in the course of his journey, halted for refreshment at the Black Lion, of which being landlord, he believed the good woman and her family were entirely devoted to his will and pleasure, Aurelia found an opportunity of speaking in private to Dolly, who had a very prepossessing appearance. She conveyed a purse of money into the hands of this young woman, telling her, while the tears trickled down her cheeks, that she was a young lady of fortune, in danger, as she apprehended, of assassination. This hint, which she communicated in a whisper, whilst the governante stood at the other end of the room, was sufficient to interest the compassionate Dolly in her behalf. As soon as the coach departed, she made her mother acquainted with the transaction; and as they naturally concluded that the young lady expected their assistance, they resolved to approve themselves worthy of her confidence.

Dolly having enlisted in their design a trusty countryman, one of her own professed admirers, they set out together for the house of the gentleman in which the fair prisoner was confined, and waited for her in secret at the end of a pleasant park, in which they naturally concluded she might be indulged with the privilege of taking the air. The event justified their conception: on the very first day of their watch, they saw her approach, accompanied by her duenna. Dolly and her attendant immediately tied their horses to a stake, and retired into a thicket, which Aurelia did not fail to enter. Dolly forthwith appeared, and taking her by the hand, led her to the horses, one of which she mounted in the utmost hurry and trepidation, while the countryman bound the duenna with a cord prepared for the purpose, gagged her mouth, and tied her to a tree, where he left her to her own meditations. Then he mounted before Dolly, and through unfrequented paths conducted his charge to an inn on the post-road, where a chaise was ready for their reception.

As he refused to proceed farther, lest his absence from his own home should create suspicion, Aurelia rewarded him liberally; but would not part with her faithful Dolly, who, indeed, had no inclination to be discharged; such an affection and attachment had she already acquired for the amiable fugitive, though she knew neither her story nor her true name. Aurelia thought proper to conceal both, and assumed the fictitious appellation of Meadows, until she should be better acquainted with the disposition and discretion of her new attendant. The first resolution she could take in the present flutter of her spirits, was to make the best of her way to London, where she thought she might find an asylum in the house of a female relation, married to an eminent physician, known by the name of Kawdle. In the execution of this hasty resolve, she travelled at a violent rate, from stage to stage, in a carriage drawn by four horses, without halting for necessary refreshment or repose, until she judged herself out of danger of being overtaken. As she appeared overwhelmed with grief and consternation, the good-natured Dolly endeavoured to alleviate her distress with diverting dis-

course; and, among other less interesting stories, entertained her with the adventures of sir Launcelot and captain Crowe, which she had seen and heard recited while they remained at the Black Lion: nor did she fail to introduce Mr. Thomas Clarke in her narrative, with such a favourable representation of his person and character, as plainly discovered that her own heart had received a rude shock from the irresistible force of his qualifications.

The history of sir Launcelot Greaves was a theme which effectually fixed the attention of Aurelia, distracted as her ideas must have been by the circumstances of her present situation. The particulars of his conduct, since the correspondence between her and him had ceased, she heard with equal concern and astonishment; for, how far soever she deemed herself detached from all possibility of future connexion with that young gentleman, she was not made of such indifferent stuff, as to learn, without emotion, the calamitous disorder of an accomplished youth, whose extraordinary virtues she could not but revere.

As they had deviated from the post-road, taken precautions to conceal their route, and made such progress, that they were now within one day's journey of London; the careful and affectionate Dolly, seeing her dear lady quite exhausted with fatigue, used all her natural rhetoric, which was very powerful, mingled with tears that flowed from the heart, in persuading Aurelia to enjoy some repose; and so far she succeeded in the attempt, that, for one night, the toil of travelling was intermitted. This recess from incredible fatigue, was a pause, that afforded our adventurer time to overtake them before they reached the metropolis;—that vast labyrinth, in which Aurelia might have been for ever lost to his inquiry.

It was in the afternoon of the day which succeeded his departure from the White Hart, that sir Launcelot arrived at the inn, where Miss Aurelia Darnel had bespoken a dish of tea, and a post-chaise for the next stage. He had, by inquiry, traced her a considerable way, without even dreaming who the person really was whom he thus pursued, and now he desired to speak with her attendant.

Dolly was not a little surprised to see sir Launcelot Greaves, of whose character she had conceived a very sublime idea from the narrative of Mr. Thomas Clarke; but she was still more surprised, when he gave her to understand, that he had charged himself with the pocket-book, containing the bank-notes, which Miss Meadows had dropped in the house where they had been threatened with insult. Miss Darnel had not yet discovered her disaster, when her attendant, running into the apartment, presented the prize, which she had received from our adventurer, with his compliments to Miss Meadows, implying a request to be admitted into her presence, that he might make a personal tender of his best services.

It is not to be supposed that the amiable Aurelia heard unmoved such a message from a person, whom her maid discovered to be the very identical sir Launcelot Greaves, whose story she had so lately related : but, as the ensuing scene requires fresh attention in the reader, we shall defer it till the next chapter, when his spirits shall be recruited from the fatigue of this.

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CHAP. XV.—Exhibiting an interview, which, it is to be hoped, will interest the curiosity of the reader.

The mind of the delicate Aurelia was strangely agitated by the intelligence which she received with her pocket-book, from Dolly. Confounded as she was by the nature of her situation, she at once perceived, that she could not, with any regard to the dictates of gratitude, refuse complying with the request of sir Launcelot; but, in the first hurry of her emotion, she directed Dolly to beg, in her name, that she might be excused for wearing a mask at the interview which he desired, as she had particular reasons, which concerned her peace, for retaining that disguise. Our adventurer submitted to this preliminary with a good grace, as he had nothing in view but the injunction of his order, and the duties of humanity; and he was admitted without farther preamble. When he entered the room, he could not help being struck with

the presence of Aurelia. Her stature was improved since he had seen her; her shape was exquisitely formed; and she received him with an air of dignity, which impressed him with a very sublime idea of her person and character. She was no less affected at the sight of our adventurer, who, though cased in armour, appeared with his head uncovered; and the exercise of travelling had thrown such a glow of health and vivacity on his features, which were naturally elegant and expressive, that we will venture to say, there was not in all England a couple that excelled this amiable pair in personal beauty and accomplishments. Aurelia shone with all the fabled graces of nymph or goddess; and to sir Launcelot might be applied what the divine poet Ariosto says of the prince Zerbino—

*Natura il fece e poi ruppe la stampa.*

When Nature stamp'd him, she the dye destroy'd.

Our adventurer, having made his obeisance to this supposed Miss Meadows, told her, with an air of pleasantry, that although he thought himself highly honoured in being admitted to her presence, and allowed to pay his respects to her, as superior beings are adored, unseen; yet his pleasure would receive a very considerable addition, if she would be pleased to withdraw that invidious veil, that he might have a glimpse of the divinity which it concealed. Aurelia immediately took off her mask, saying, with a faltering accent, 'I cannot be so ungrateful as to deny such a small favour to a gentleman who has laid me under the most important obligations.'

The unexpected apparition of Miss Aurelia Darnel, beaming with all the emanations of ripened beauty, blushing with all the graces of the most lovely confusion, could not but produce a violent effect upon the mind of sir Launcelot Greaves. He was, indeed, overwhelmed with a mingled transport of astonishment, admiration, affection, and awe. The colour vanished from his cheeks, and he stood gazing upon her, in silence, with the most emphatic expression of countenance. Aurelia was infected by his disorder: she began to tremble, and the roses fluctuated on her face. 'I cannot forget,' said she, 'that I

owe my life to the courage and humanity of sir Launcelot Greaves, and that he at the same time rescued from the most dreadful death a dear and venerable parent.'— 'Would to heaven she still survived!' cried our adventurer, with great emotion: 'she was the friend of my youth, the kind patroness of my felicity! My guardian angel forsook me when she expired! her last injunctions are deep engraven on my heart.'

While he pronounced these words, she lifted her handkerchief to her fair eyes, and, after some pause, proceeded; in a tremulous tone, 'I hope, sir—I hope you have—I should be sorry—pardon me, sir, I cannot reflect upon such an interesting subject unmoved.' Here she fetched a deep sigh, that was accompanied by a flood of tears; while the knight continued to bend his eyes upon her with the utmost eagerness of attention. Having recollected herself a little, she endeavoured to shift the conversation: 'You have been abroad since I had the pleasure to see you: I hope you were agreeably amused in your travels?'—'No, madam,' said our hero, drooping his head, 'I have been unfortunate.' When she, with the most enchanting sweetness of benevolence, expressed her concern to hear he had been unhappy, and her hope that his misfortunes were not past remedy; he lifted up his eyes, and, fixing them upon her again with a look of tender dejection, 'Cut off,' said he, 'from the possession of what my soul held most dear, I wished for death, and was visited by distraction. I have been abandoned by my reason: my youth is for ever blasted.'

The tender heart of Aurelia could bear no more; her knees began to totter; the lustre vanished from her eyes; and she fainted in the arms of her attendant. Sir Launcelot, aroused by this circumstance, assisted Dolly in seating her mistress on a couch, where she soon recovered, and saw the knight on his knees before her. 'I am still happy,' said he, 'in being able to move your compassion, though I have been held unworthy of your esteem.'—'Do me justice,' she replied: 'my best esteem has been always inseparably connected with the character of sir Launcelot Greaves.'—'Is it possible?' cried our hero:

‘ then surely I have no reason to complain. If I have moved your compassion, and possess your esteem, I am but one degree short of supreme happiness : that, however, is a gigantic step. O Miss Darnel ! when I remember that dear, that melancholy moment ——’ So saying, he gently touched her hand, in order to press it to his lips, and perceived on her finger the very individual ring which he had presented her in her mother’s presence, as an interchanged testimony of plighted faith. Starting at the well-known object, the sight of which conjured up a strange confusion of ideas, ‘ This,’ said he, ‘ was once the pledge of something still more cordial than esteem.’ Aurelia, blushing at this remark, while her eyes lightened with unusual vivacity, replied, in a severer tone, ‘ Sir, you best know how it lost its original signification.’—‘ By heaven ! I do not, madam,’ exclaimed our adventurer : ‘ with me it was ever held a sacred idea, throned within my heart, cherished with such fervency of regard, with such reverence of affection, as the devout anchorite more unreasonably pays to those sainted relics that constitute the object of his adoration.’—‘ And, like those relics,’ answered Miss Darnel, ‘ I have been insensible of my votary’s devotion. A saint I must have been, or something more, to know the sentiments of your heart by inspiration.’—‘ Did I forbear,’ said he, ‘ to express, to repeat, to enforce the dictates of the purest passion that ever warmed the human breast, until I was denied access, and formally discarded by that cruel dismissal ?’—‘ I must beg your pardon, sir,’ cried Aurelia, interrupting him hastily ; ‘ I know not what you mean.’—‘ That fatal sentence,’ said he, ‘ if not pronounced by your own lips, at least written by your own fair hand, which drove me out an exile for ever from the paradise of your affection.’—‘ I would not,’ she replied, ‘ do sir Launcelot Greaves the injury to suppose him capable of imposition ; but you talk of things to which I am an utter stranger. I have a right, sir, to demand of your honour, that you will not impute to me your breaking off a connexion, which, I would rather wish, had never ——’—‘ Heaven and earth ! what do I hear ?’ cried our impatient knight : ‘ have I

not the baleful letter to produce? What else but Miss Darnel's explicit and express declaration could have destroyed the sweetest hope that ever cheered my soul; could have obliged me to resign all claim to that felicity, for which alone I wished to live; could have filled my bosom with unutterable sorrow and despair; could have even divested me of reason, and driven me from the society of men, a poor, forlorn, wandering lunatic, such as you see me now prostrate at your feet; all the blossoms of my youth withered, all the honours of my family decayed?

Aurelia, looking wistfully at her lover, 'Sir,' said she, 'you overwhelm me with amazement and anxiety: you are imposed upon, if you have received any such letter: you are deceived, if you thought Aurelia Darnel could be so insensible, ungrateful, and—inconstant.'

The last word she pronounced with some hesitation, and a downcast look, while her face underwent a total suffusion, and the knight's heart began to palpitate with all the violence of emotion. He eagerly imprinted a kiss upon her hand, exclaiming, in interrupted phrase, 'Can it be possible? Heaven grant—Sure this is no illusion! O, madam! shall I call you my Aurelia? My heart is bursting with a thousand fond thoughts and presages. You shall see that dire paper, which has been the source of all my woes: it is the constant companion of my travels. Last night I nourished my chagrin with the perusal of its horrid contents.'

Aurelia expressed great impatience to view the cruel forgery, for such she assured him it must be; but he could not gratify her desire till the arrival of his servant with the portmanteau. In the mean time, tea was called. The lovers were seated: he looked and languished; she blushed and faltered: all was doubt and delirium, fondness and flutter. Their mutual disorder communicated itself to the kind-hearted, sympathising Dolly, who had been witness to the interview, and deeply affected with the disclosure of the scene. Unspeakable was her surprise, when she found her mistress Miss Meadows was no other than the celebrated Aurelia Darnel, whose eu-



logium she had heard so eloquently pronounced by her sweetheart Mr. Thomas Clarke; a discovery, which still more endeared her lady to her affection. She had wept plentifully at the progress of their mutual explanation; and was now so disconcerted, that she scarce knew the meaning of the orders she had received: she set the kettle on the table, and placed the tea-board on the fire. Her confusion, by attracting the notice of her mistress, helped to relieve her from her own embarrassing situation. She, with her own delicate hands, rectified the mistake of Dolly, who still continued to sob, and said, 'Yaw may think, my lady Darnel, as how I 'aive yeaten hool-cheese; but it y'ant soa. I'se think, vor maai peart; as how I 'aive been bewitched.' Sir Launcelot could not help smiling at the simplicity of Dolly, whose goodness of heart and attachment Aurelia did not fail to extol as soon as her back was turned. It was in consequence of this commendation, that, the next time she entered the room, our adventurer, for the first time, considered her face, and seemed to be struck with her features: he asked her some questions, which she answered to his satisfaction; applauded her regard for her lady, and assured her of his friendship and protection. He now begged to know the cause that obliged his Aurelia to travel at such a rate, and in such an equipage; and she informed him of those particulars, which we have already communicated to the reader.

Sir Launcelot glowed with resentment, when he understood how his dear Aurelia had been oppressed by her perfidious and cruel guardian. He bit his nether lip, rolled his eyes around, started from his seat, and, striding across the room, 'I remember,' said he, 'the dying words of her who is now a saint in heaven:—That violent man, my brother-in-law, who is Aurelia's sole guardian, will thwart her wishes with every obstacle that brutal resentment and implacable malice can contrive. What followed, it would ill become me to repeat; but she concluded with these words:—The rest we must leave to the dispensations of Providence. Was it not Providence that sent me hither, to guard and protect the injured

Aurelia?' Then, turning to Miss Darnel, whose eyes streamed with tears, he added, 'Yes, divine creature! Heaven, careful of your safety, and in compassion to my sufferings, has guided me hither in this mysterious manner, that I might defend you from violence, and enjoy this transition from madness to deliberation, from despair to felicity.' So saying, he approached this amiable mourner, this fragrant flower of beauty, glittering with the dew-drops of the morning; this sweetest, gentlest, loveliest ornament of human nature: he gazed upon her with looks of love ineffable; he sat down by her; he pressed her soft hand in his; he began to fear that all he saw was the flattering vision of a distempered brain. He looked, and sighed; and, turning up his eyes to heaven, breathed, in broken murmurs, the chaste raptures of his soul. The tenderness of this communication was too painful to be long endured. Aurelia industriously interposed other subjects of discourse, that his attention might not be dangerously overcharged; and the afternoon passed insensibly away.

Though he had determined, in his own mind, never more to quit this idol of his soul, they had not yet concerted any plan of conduct, when their happiness was all at once interrupted by a repetition of cries, denoting horror; and a servant, coming in, said, he believed some rogues were murdering a traveller on the highway. The supposition of such distress operated like gunpowder on the disposition of our adventurer, who, without considering the situation of Aurelia, and indeed without seeing, or being capable to think on her, or on any other subject, for the time being, ran directly to the stable, and, mounting the first horse which he found saddled, issued out in the twilight, having no other weapon but his sword. He rode full speed to the spot whence the cries seemed to proceed; but they sounded more remote as he advanced. Nevertheless, he followed them to a considerable distance from the road, over fields, ditches, and hedges; and at last came so near, that he could plainly distinguish the voice of his own squire, Timothy Crabshaw, bellowing for mercy with hideous vociferation. Stimulated by this

recognition, he redoubled his career in the dark, till at length his horse plunged into a hole, the nature of which he could not comprehend, but he found it impracticable to disengage him. It was with some difficulty that he himself clambered over a ruined wall, and regained the open ground. Here he groped about, in the utmost impatience of anxiety, ignorant of the place, mad with vexation for the fate of his unfortunate squire, and between whiles invaded with a pang of concern for Aurelia, left among strangers, unguarded, and alarmed. In the midst of this emotion, he bethought himself of hallooing aloud, that, in case he should be in the neighbourhood of any inhabited place, he might be heard and assisted. He accordingly practised this expedient, which was not altogether without effect; for he was immediately answered by an old friend, no other than his own steed Bronzomarte, who, hearing his master's voice, neighed strenuously at a small distance. The knight, being well acquainted with the sound, heard with astonishment; and, advancing in the right direction, found his noble charger fastened to a tree. He forthwith untied, and mounted him; then, laying the reins upon his neck, allowed him to choose his own path, in which he began to travel with equal steadiness and expedition. They had not proceeded far, when the knight's ears were again saluted by the cries of Crabshaw; which Bronzomarte no sooner heard, than he pricked up his ears, neighed, and quickened his pace, as if he had been sensible of the squire's distress; and hastened to his relief. Sir Launcelot, notwithstanding his own disquiet, could not help observing and admiring this generous sensibility of his horse: he began to think himself some hero of romance, mounted upon a winged steed, inspired with reason, and directed by some humane enchanter, who pitied virtue in distress. All circumstances considered, it is no wonder that the commotion in the mind of our adventurer produced some such delirium. All night he continued the chace; the voice, which was repeated at intervals, still retreating before him, till the morning began to appear in the east, when, by divers piteous groans, he was directed to the corner of

a wood, where he beheld his miserable squire stretched upon the grass, and Gilbert feeding by him, altogether unconcerned, the helmet and the lance suspended at the saddle-bow, and the portmanteau safely fixed upon the crupper.

The knight, riding up to Crabshaw, with equal surprise and concern, asked what had brought him there; and Timothy, after some pause, during which he surveyed his master with a rueful aspect, answered, 'The devil.'—'One would imagine, indeed, you had some such conveyance,' said sir Launcelot: 'I have followed your cries since last evening, I know not how, nor whither, and never could come up with you till this moment. But say, what damage have you sustained, that you lie in that wretched posture, and groan so dismally?'—'I can't guess,' replied the squire, 'if it bea'n't that my hoole carcass is drilled into oilet hools, and my flesh pinched into a jelly.'—'How? wherefore?' cried the knight: 'who were the miscreants that treated you in such a barbarous manner? Do you know the ruffians?'—'I know nothing at all,' answered the peevish squire, 'but that I was tormented by vive hoondred and vifty thousand legions of devils, and there's an end oan't.'—'Well, you must have a little patience, Crabshaw: there's a salve for every sore.'—'Yaw mought as well tell ma, for every zow there's a zir-reverence.'—'For a man in your condition, methinks you talk very much at your ease. Try if you can get up and mount Gilbert, that you may be conveyed to some place, where you can have proper assistance. So—well done! cheerly!'

Timothy actually made an effort to rise; but fell down again, and uttered a dismal yell. Then his master exhorted him to take advantage of a park-wall, by which he lay, and raise himself gradually upon it. Crabshaw, eyeing him askance, said, by way of reproach, for his not alighting and assisting him in person, 'Thatch your house with a t——d, and you'll have more teachers than reachers.' Having pronounced this elegant adage, he made shift to stand upon his legs; and now, the knight lending a hand, was mounted upon Gilbert, though not

without a world of Os and Ahs, and other ejaculations of pain and impatience. As they jogged on together, our adventurer endeavoured to learn the particulars of the disaster which had befallen the squire; but all the information he could obtain amounted to a very imperfect sketch of the adventure. By dint of a thousand interrogations, he understood that Crabshaw had been, in the preceding evening, encountered by three persons on horseback, with Venetian masks on their faces, which he mistook for their natural features, and was terrified accordingly; that they not only presented pistols to his breast, and led his horse out of the highway, but pricked him with goads, and pinched him from time to time, till he screamed with the torture; that he was led through unfrequented places across the country, sometimes at an easy trot, sometimes at full gallop; and tormented all night by those hideous demons, who vanished at day-break, and left him lying on the spot where he was found by his master. This was a mystery which our hero could by no means unriddle: it was the more unaccountable, as the squire had not been robbed of his money, horse, or baggage. He was even disposed to believe, that Crabshaw's brain was disordered, and the whole account he had given no more than a chimera. This opinion, however, he could no longer retain, when he arrived at an inn on the post-road, and found, upon examination, that Timothy's lower extremities were covered with blood, and all the rest of his body speckled with livid marks of contusion: but he was still more chagrined, when the landlord informed him, that he was thirty miles distant from the place where he had left Aurelia, and that his way lay through cross-roads, which were almost impassable at that season of the year. Alarmed at this intelligence, he gave directions that his squire should be immediately conveyed to bed, in a comfortable chamber, as he complained more and more; and indeed was seized with a fever, occasioned by the fatigue, the pain, and terror he had undergone. A neighbouring apothecary being called, and giving it as his opinion, that he could not for some days be in a condition to travel, his master

deposited a sum of money in his hands, desiring he might be properly attended, till he should hear farther. Then, mounting Bronzomarte, he set out with a guide for the place he had left, not without a thousand fears and perplexities, arising from the reflection of having left the jewel of his heart with such precipitation.

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CHAP. XVI.—Which, it is to be hoped, the reader will find an agreeable medley of mirth and madness, sense and absurdity.

It was not without reason that our adventurer afflicted himself; his fears were but too prophetic. When he alighted at the inn, which he had left so abruptly the preceding evening, he ran directly to the apartment where he had been so happy in Aurelia's company; but here he saw not: all was solitary. Turning to the woman of the house, who had followed him into the room, 'Where is the lady?' cried he, in a tone of impatience. Mine hostess, screwing up her features into a very demure aspect, said, she saw so many ladies, she could not pretend to know whom he meant. 'I tell thee, woman,' exclaimed the knight in a louder accent, 'thou never sawest such another. I mean that miracle of beauty.'—'Very like,' replied the dame, as she retired to the room door: 'husband, here's one as axes concerning a miracle of beauty; hi, hi, hi. Can you give him any information about this miracle of beauty? O la! hi, hi, hi.' Instead of answering this question, the inn-keeper, advancing, and surveying sir Launcelot, 'Friend,' said he, 'you are the person who carried off my horse out of the stable.'—'Tell me not of a horse: where is the young lady?'—'Now I will tell you of the horse; and I'll make you find him too, before you and I part.'—'Wretched animal! how darest thou dally with my impatience?—Speak, or despair. What is become of Miss Meadows? Say, did she leave this place of her own accord, or was she—'Ah! speak! answer! or, by the powers above——.'—'I'll answer you flat: she you call Miss Meadows is in very good hands; so you may make yourself easy on that score.'—'Sacred Heaven! explain your meaning,

miscreant, or I'll make you a dreadful example to all the insolent publicans of the realm.' So saying, he seized him with one hand, and, dashing him on the floor, set one foot on his belly, and kept him trembling in that prostrate attitude. The ostler and waiter flying to the assistance of their master, our adventurer unsheathed his sword, declaring, he would dismiss their souls from their bodies, and exterminate the whole family from the face of the earth, if they would not immediately give him the satisfaction he required.

The hostess, being by this time terrified almost out of her senses, fell on her knees before him, begging he would spare their lives, and promising to declare the whole truth. He would not, however, remove his foot from the body of her husband, until she told him, that, in less than half an hour after he had sallied out upon the supposed robbers, two chaises had arrived, each drawn by four horses: that two men, armed with pistols, alighting from one of them, laid violent hands upon the young lady; and, notwithstanding her struggling and shrieking, forced her into the other carriage, in which was an infirm gentleman, who called himself her guardian: that the maid was left to the care of a third servant to follow with a third chaise, which was got ready with all possible despatch, while the other two proceeded at full speed on the road to London. It was by this communicative lacquey the people of the house were informed, that the old gentleman, his master, was squire Darnel; the young lady his niece and ward; and our adventurer a needy sharper, who wanted to make a prey of her fortune. The knight, fired even almost to frenzy by this intimation, spurned the carcass of his host; and, his eye gleaming terror, rushed into the yard in order to mount Bronzomarte, and pursue the ravisher, when he was diverted from his purpose by a new incident.

One of the postillions, who had driven the chaise in which Dolly was conveyed, happened to arrive at that instant; when, seeing our hero, he ran up to him, cap in hand, and, presenting a letter, accosted him in these words: 'Please your noble honour, if your honour be

sir Launcelot Greaves, of the West Riding, here's a letter from a gentlewoman, that I promised to deliver into your honour's own hands.'

The knight, snatching the letter with the utmost avidity, broke it up, and found the contents couched in these terms:—

'Honoured sir,

'The man az gi'en me leave to lat yaw know my dear leady is going to London with her unkle squire Darnel. Be not conzarned, honoured sir, vor I'se teake it on mai laife, to let yaw knaw wheare we be zettled, if zo be I can vind wheare you loadge in London. The man says yaw may put it in the pooblic prints. I houp the bareheir will be honest enuff to deliver this scrowl; and that your honour will pardon your umbil servant to command,

'DOROTHY COWSLIP.'

'P. S. Please my kaind sarvice to laayer Clarke. Squire Darnel's man is very civil vor sartain; but I'aive no thoughts on him, I'll assure yaw. Marry hap, worse ware may have a better chap, as the zaying goes.'

Nothing could be more seasonable than the delivery of this billet; which he had no sooner perused, than his reflection returned, and he entered into a serious deliberation with his own heart. He considered that Aurelia was, by this time, far beyond a possibility of being overtaken, and that, by a precipitate pursuit, he should only expose his own infirmities. He confided in the attachment of his mistress, and in the fidelity of her maid, who would find opportunities of communicating her sentiments, by the means of this lacquey, of whom he perceived by the letter she had already made a conquest. He therefore resolved to bridle his impatience; to proceed leisurely to London; and, instead of taking any rash step, which might induce Antony Darnel to remove his niece from that city, remain in seeming quiet until she should be settled, and her guardian returned to the country. Aurelia had mentioned to him the name of doctor Kawdle, and from him he expected, in due time, to receive the most interesting information.

These reflections had an instantaneous effect upon our hero, whose rage immediately subsided, and whose visage gradually resumed its natural cast of courtesy and good-humour. He forthwith gratified the postillion with such



a remuneration, as sent him dancing into the kitchen, where he did not fail to extol the generosity and immense fortune of sir Launcelot Greaves.

Our adventurer's next step was to see Bronzomarte properly accommodated; then he ordered a refreshment for himself, and retired into an apartment, where the host, with his wife and all the servants, waited on him to beseech his honour to forgive their impertinence, which was owing to their ignorance of his honour's quality, and the false information they had received from the gentleman's servant. He had too much magnanimity to retain the least resentment against such inconsiderable objects. He not only pardoned them, without hesitation, but assured the landlord, he would be accountable for the horse, which, however, was that same evening brought home by a countryman, who had found him pounded, as it were, within the walls of a ruined cottage. As the knight had been greatly fatigued, without enjoying any rest for eight and forty hours, he resolved to indulge himself with one night's repose, and then return to the place where he had left his squire indisposed; for by this time even his concern for Timothy had recurred.

On a candid scrutiny of his own heart, he found himself much less unhappy than he had been before his interview with Aurelia; for, instead of being, as formerly, tormented with the pangs of despairing love, which had actually unsettled his understanding, he was now happily convinced, that he had inspired the tender breast of Aurelia with mutual affection; and, though she was invidiously snatched from his embrace, in the midst of such endearments as had wound up his soul to ecstasy and transport, he did not doubt of being able to rescue her from the power of an inhuman kinsman, whose guardianship would soon of course expire; and, in the mean time, he rested, with the most perfect dependence, on her constancy and virtue.

As he next day crossed the country, ruminating on the disaster that had befallen his squire, and could now compare circumstances coolly, he easily comprehended the whole scheme of that adventure, which was no other than

an artifice of Antony Darnel and his emissaries, to draw him from the inn, where he proposed to execute his design upon the innocent Aurelia. He took it for granted, that the uncle, having been made acquainted with his niece's elopement, had followed her track, by the help of such information as he received from one stage to another; and that, receiving more particulars at the White Hart touching sir Launcelot, he had formed the scheme, in which Crabshaw was an involuntary instrument towards the seduction of his master.

Amusing himself with these and other cogitations, our hero, in the afternoon, reached the place of his destination; and, entering the inn where Timothy had been left at sick-quarters, chanced to meet the apothecary retiring precipitately, in a very unsavory pickle, from the chamber of his patient. When he inquired about the health of his squire, this retainer to medicine, wiping himself all the while with a napkin, answered, in manifest confusion, that he apprehended him to be in a very dangerous way, from an inflammation of the *pia mater*, which had produced a most furious delirium. Then he proceeded to explain, in technical terms, the method of cure he had followed; and concluded with telling him, the poor squire's brain was so outrageously disordered, that he had rejected all administration, and just thrown a urinal in his face.

The knight's humanity being alarmed at this intelligence, he resolved that Crabshaw should have the benefit of farther advice, and asked if there was not a physician in the place. The apothecary, after some interjections of hesitation, owned, there was a doctor in the village, an odd sort of a humourist; but he believed he had not much to do in the way of his profession, and was not much used to the forms of prescription. He was counted a scholar to be sure; but as to his medical capacity, he would not take upon him to say. 'No matter,' cried sir Launcelot: 'he may strike out some lucky thought for the benefit of the patient; and I desire you will call him instantly.'

While the apothecary was absent on this service, our

adventurer took it in his head to question the landlord about the character of this physician, which had been so unfavourably represented; and received the following information:—

‘For my peart, measter, I knows nothing amiss of the doctor: he’s a quiet sort of an inoffensive man; uses my house sometimes, and pays for what he has, like the rest of my customers. They says he deals very little in physic-stuff, but cures his patients with fasting and water-gruel, whereby he can’t expect the ‘pothecary to be his friend. You knows, measter, one must live, and let live, as the saying is. I must say, he, for the value of three guineas, set up my wife’s constitution in such a manner, that I have saved, within these two years, I believe, vorty pounds in ‘pothecary’s bills. But what of this? Every man must eat, thof at another’s expense; and I should be in a deady hole myself, if all my customers should take it into their heads to drink nothing but water-gruel, because it is good for the constitution. Thank God, I have as good a constitution as e’er a man in England; but, for all that, I and my whole family bleed and purge, and take a diet-drink twice a-year, by way of serving the ‘pothecary, who is a very honest man, and a very good neighbour.’

Their conversation was interrupted by the return of the apothecary with the doctor, who had very little of the faculty in his appearance. He was dressed remarkably plain; seemed to be turned of fifty; had a careless air, and a sarcastical turn in his countenance. Before he entered the sick man’s chamber, he asked some questions concerning the disease; and when the apothecary, pointing to his own head, said, ‘It lies all here;’ the doctor, turning to sir Launcelot, replied, ‘If that be all, there’s nothing in it.’

Upon a more particular inquiry about the symptoms, he was told that the blood was seemingly viscous, and salt upon the tongue; the urine remarkably acrosaline; and the fæces atrabilious and fœtid. When the doctor said he would engage to find the same phenomena in every healthy man of the three kingdoms, the apothecary

added, that the patient was manifestly comatous, and moreover afflicted with griping pains and borborygmata. 'A pish for your borborygmata!' cried the physician: 'what has been done?' To this question, he replied, that venesection had been three times performed; that a vesicatory had been applied *inter scapulas*; that the patient had taken occasionally of a cathartic apozem; and, between whiles, alexipharmic boluses and neutral draughts. 'Neutral, indeed,' said the doctor; 'so neutral, that I'll be crucified if ever they declare either for the patient or the disease.' So saying, he brushed into Crabshaw's chamber, followed by our adventurer, who was almost suffocated at his first entrance. The day was close; the window-shutters were fastened; a huge fire blazed in the chimney; thick harateen curtains were close drawn round the bed, where the wretched squire lay extended, under an enormous load of blankets. The nurse, who had all the exteriors of a bawd given to drink, sat stewing in this apartment, like a d—d soul in some infernal bagnio; but, rising when the company entered, made her courtesies with great decorum. 'Well,' said the doctor, 'how does your patient, nurse?'—'Blessed be God for it, I hope in a fair way: to be sure his apozem has had a blessed effect: five and twenty stools since three o'clock this morning: but then, a'would not suffer the blisters to be put upon his thighs. Good lack! a'has been mortally obstropolous, and out of his senses all this blessed day.'—'You lie,' cried the squire; 'I a'n't out of my seven senses, thof I'm half mad with vexation.'

The doctor having withdrawn the curtain, the hapless squire appeared very pale and ghastly; and, having surveyed his master with a rueful aspect, addressed him in these words: 'Sir knight, I beg a boon: be pleased to tie a stone about the neck of the apothecary, and a halter about the neck of the nurse, and throw one into the next river, and the other over the next tree, and, in so doing, you will do a charitable deed to your fellow-creatures; for he and she do the devil's work in partnership, and have sent many a score of their betters home to him before their time.'—'O, he begins to talk sensibly:

have a good heart,' said the physician : 'What is your disorder ?'—'Physic.'—'What do you chiefly complain of ?'—'The doctor.'—'Does your head ache ?'—'Yea, with impertinence.'—'Have you a pain in your back ?'—'Yes, where the blister lies.'—'Are you sick at stomach ?'—'Yes, with hunger.'—'Do you feel any shivering ?'—'Always at sight of the apothecary.'—'Do you perceive any load in your bowels ?'—'I would the apothecary's conscience was as clear.'—'Are you thirsty ?'—'Not thirsty enough to drink barley-water.'—'Be pleased to look into his fæces,' said the apothecary : 'he has got a rough tongue, and a very foul mouth, I'll assure you.'—'I have known that the case with some limbs of the faculty, where they stood more in need of correction than of physic. Well, my honest friend, since you have already undergone the proper purgations in due form, and say you have no other disease than the doctor, we will set you on your legs again, without farther question. Here, nurse, open that window, and throw these vials into the street. Now lower the curtain, without shutting the casement, that the man may not be stifled in his own steam. In the next place, take off two thirds of these coals, and one third of these blankets. How dost feel now, my heart ?'—'I should feel heart-whole, if so be yow would throw the noorse after the bottles, and the 'pothecary after the noorse, and oorder me a pound of chops for my dinner ; for I be so hoongry, I could eat a horse behind the saddle.'

The apothecary, seeing what passed, retired of his own accord, holding up his hands in sign of astonishment. The nurse was dismissed in the same breath. Crabshaw rose, dressed himself without assistance, and made a hearty meal on the first eatable that presented itself to his view. The knight passed the evening with the physician, who, from his first appearance, concluded he was mad ; but, in the course of conversation, found means to resign that opinion, without adopting any other in lieu of it, and parted with him under all the impatience of curiosity. The knight, on his part, was very well entertained with the witty sarcasms and erudition of the doctor, who ap-

peared to be a sort of cynic philosopher, tinctured with misanthropy, and at open war with the whole body of apothecaries, whom, however, it was by no means his interest to disoblige.

Next day, Crabshaw being to all appearance perfectly recovered, our adventurer reckoned with the apothecary, paid the landlord, and set out on his return for the London road, resolving to lay aside his armour at some distance from the metropolis; for, ever since his interview with Aurelia, his fondness for chivalry had been gradually abating. As the torrent of his despair had disordered the current of his sober reflection, so now, as that despair subsided, his thoughts began to flow deliberately in their ancient channel. All day long he regaled his imagination with plans of connubial happiness, formed on the possession of the incomparable Aurelia; and determined to wait with patience until the law should supersede the authority of her guardian, rather than adopt any violent expedient which might hazard the interest of his passion.

He had for some time travelled in the turnpike road, when his reverie was suddenly interrupted by a confused noise; and when he lifted up his eyes, he beheld, at a little distance, a rabble of men and women, variously armed with flails, pitch-forks, poles, and muskets, acting offensively against a strange figure on horseback, who, with a kind of lance, laid about him with incredible fury. Our adventurer was not so totally abandoned by the spirit of chivalry, as to see, without emotion, a single knight in danger of being overpowered by such a multitude of adversaries. Without staying to put on his helmet, he ordered Crabshaw to follow him in the charge against those plebeians; then couching his lance, and giving Bronzomarte the spur, he began his career with such impetuosity, as overturned all that happened to be in his way; and intimidated the rabble to such a degree, that they retired before him like a flock of sheep, the greater part of them believing he was the devil *in propria persona*.

He came in the very nick of time to save the life of the other errant, against whom three loaded muskets were ac-

tually levelled, at the very instant that our adventurer began his charge. The unknown knight was so sensible of this seasonable interposition, that, riding up to our hero, 'Brother,' said he, 'this is the second time you have holp me off, when I was bump ashore. Bess Mizen, I must say, is no more than a leaky bumboat, in comparison of the glorious galley you want to man. I desire that henceforth we may cruise in the same latitudes, brother; and I'll be d—d if I don't stand by you as long as I have a stick standing, or can carry a rag of canvas.'

By this address, our knight recognized the novice, captain Crowe, who had found means to accommodate himself with a very strange suit of armour. By way of helmet, he wore one of the caps used by the light horse, with straps buckled under his chin, and contrived in such a manner as to conceal his whole visage, except the eyes. Instead of cuirass, mail, greaves, and the other pieces of complete armour, he was cased in a postillion's leathern jerkin, covered with thin plates of tinned iron: his buckler was a pot-lid, his lance a hop-pole, shod with iron; and a basket-hilt broad sword, like that of Hudibras, depended by a broad buff belt, that girded his middle. His feet were defended by jack-boots, and his hands by the gloves of a trooper. Sir Launcelot would not lose time in examining particulars, as he perceived that some mischief had been done, and that the enemy had rallied at a distance: he therefore commanded Crowe to follow him, and rode off with great expedition; but he did not perceive that his squire was taken prisoner; nor did the captain recollect that his nephew, Tom Clarke, had been disabled and secured in the middle of the fray. The truth is, the poor captain had been so belaboured about the pate, that it was a wonder he remembered his own name.

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CHAP. XVII.—Containing adventures of chivalry, equally new and surprising.

The knight sir Launcelot, and the novice Crowe, retreated with equal order and expedition to the distance of

half a league from the field of battle, where the former, halting, proposed to make a lodgement in a very decent house of entertainment, distinguished by the sign of St. George of Cappadocia encountering the dragon; an achievement, in which temporal and spiritual chivalry were happily reconciled. Two such figures, alighting at the inn-gate, did not pass through the yard unnoticed and unadmired by the guests and attendants; some of whom fairly took to their heels, on the supposition that these outlandish creatures were the avant-couriers, or heralds, of a French invasion. The fears and doubts, however, of those who ventured to stay, were soon dispelled, when our hero accosted them in the English tongue, and with the most courteous demeanour desired to be shown into an apartment. Had captain Crowe been the spokesman, perhaps their suspicions would not have so quickly subsided; for he was, in reality, a very extraordinary novice, not only in chivalry, but also in his external appearance; and particularly in those dialects of the English language, which are used by the terrestrial animals of this kingdom. He desired the ostler to take his horse in tow, and bring him to his moorings in a safe riding: he ordered the waiter, who showed them into a parlour, to bear a hand, ship his oars, mind his helm, and bring along-side a short allowance of brandy or grog, that he might cant a slug into his bread-room; for there was such a heaving and pitching, that he believed he should shift his ballast. The fellow understood no part of this address but the word brandy, at mention of which he disappeared. Then Crowe, throwing himself into an elbow-chair, 'Stop my hawse-holes,' cried he; 'I can't think what's the matter, brother; but, egad, my head sings and simmers like a pot of chowder; my eye-sight yaws to and again, d'ye see: then there's such a walloping and whushing in my hold, smite my—Lord have mercy upon us. Here, you swab, ne'er mind a glass: hand me the noggin.'

The latter part of this address was directed to the waiter, who had returned with a quartern of brandy, which Crowe, snatching eagerly, started into his bread-room at one cant. Indeed there was no time to be lost, inas-



much as he seemed to be on the verge of fainting away when he swallowed this cordial, by which he was instantaneously revived. He then desired the servant to unbuckle the straps of his helmet; but this was a task which the drawer could not perform, even though assisted with the good offices of sir Launcelot; for the head and jaws were so much swelled with the discipline they had undergone, that the straps and buckles lay buried, as it were, in pits formed by the tumefaction of the adjacent parts. Fortunately for the novice, a neighbouring surgeon passed by the door on horseback; a circumstance, which the waiter, who saw him from the window, no sooner disclosed, than the knight had recourse to his assistance. This practitioner, having viewed the whole figure, and more particularly the head of Crowe, in silent wonder, proceeded to feel his pulse; and then declared, that as the inflammation was very great, and going on with violence to its acme, it would be necessary to begin with copious phlebotomy, and then to empty the intestinal canal. So saying, he began to strip the arm of the captain, who, perceiving his aim, 'Avast, brother,' cried he: 'you go the wrong way to work: you may as well rummage the after-hold, when the damage is in the forecastle. I shall right again, when my jaws are unhooped.'

With these words he drew a clasp-knife from his pocket, and, advancing to a glass, applied it so vigorously to the leather straps of his head-piece, that the Gordian knot was cut, without any other damage to his face than a moderate scarification, which, added to the tumefaction of features, naturally strong, and a whole week's growth of a very bushy beard, produced, on the whole, a most hideous caricatura. After all, there was a necessity for the administration of the surgeon, who found divers contusions on different parts of the skull, which even the tin cap had not been able to protect from the weapons of the rustics.

These being shaved and dressed *secundum artem*, and the operator dismissed with a proper acknowledgment, our knight detached one of the post-boys to the field of action, for intelligence concerning Mr. Clarke and squire

Timothy; and, in the interim, desired to know the particulars of Crowe's adventures since he parted from him at the White Hart. A connected relation, in plain English, was what he had little reason to expect from the novice, who, nevertheless, exerted his faculties to the uttermost for his satisfaction. He gave him to understand, that in steering his course to Birmingham, where he thought of fitting himself with tackle, he had fallen in, by accident, at a public house, with an itinerant tinker, in the very act of mending a kettle: that, seeing him do his business like an able workman, he had applied to him for advice; and the tinker, after having considered the subject, had undertaken to make him such a suit of armour as neither sword nor lance should penetrate: that they adjourned to the next town, where the leather coat, the plates of tinned iron, the lance, and the broad sword were purchased, together with a copper saucepan, which the artist was now at work upon, in converting it into a shield: but, in the mean time, the captain, being impatient to begin his career of chivalry, had accommodated himself with a pot-lid, and taken to the highway, notwithstanding all the entreaties, tears, and remonstrances of his nephew Tom Clarke, who could not however be prevailed upon to leave him in the dangerous voyage he had undertaken: that this being but the second day of his journal, he descried five or six men on horseback, bearing up full in his teeth; upon which he threw his sails aback, and prepared for action: that he hailed them at a considerable distance, and bade them bring to: that, when they came along-side, notwithstanding his hail, he ordered them to clew up their courses, and furl their topsails, otherwise he would be foul of their quarters: that hearing this salute, they luffed all at once, till their cloth shook in the wind; then he hallooed in a loud voice, that his sweetheart, Besselia Mizen, wore the broad pendant of beauty, to which they must strike their topsails, on pain of being sent to the bottom: that, after having eyed him for some time with astonishment, they clapped on all their sails, some of them running under his stern, and others athwart his forefoot, and got clear off: that,

not satisfied with running a-head, they all of a sudden tacked about, and, one of them boarding him on the lee-quarter, gave him such a drubbing about his upper-works, that the lights danced in his lanterns: that he returned the salute with his hop-pole so effectually, that his aggressor broached to in the twinkling of a handspike; and then he was engaged with all the rest of the enemy, except one, who sheered off, and soon returned with a mosquito fleet of small craft, who had done him considerable damage, and, in all probability, would have made prize of him, hadn't he been brought off by the knight's gallantry. He said, that, in the beginning of the conflict, Tom Clarke rode up to the foremost of the enemy, as he did suppose, in order to prevent hostilities; but before he got up to him, near enough to hold discourse, he was pooped with a sea that almost sent him to the bottom, and then towed off he knew not whither.

Crowe had scarce finished his narration, which consisted of broken hints and unconnected explosions of sea terms, when a gentleman of the neighbourhood, who acted in the commission of the peace, arrived at the gate, attended by a constable, who had in custody the bodies of Thomas Clarke and Timothy Crabshaw, surrounded by five men on horseback, and an innumerable posse of men, women, and children, on foot. The captain, who always kept a good look-out, no sooner descried this cavalcade and procession, than he gave notice to sir Launcelot, and advised that they should crowd away with all the cloth they could carry. Our adventurer was of another opinion, and determined, at any rate, to procure the enlargement of the prisoners. The justice, ordering his attendants to stay without the gate, sent his compliments to sir Launcelot Greaves, and desired to speak with him for a few minutes. He was immediately admitted, and could not help starting at sight of Crowe, who, by this time, had no remains of the human physiognomy, so much was the swelling increased and the skin discoloured. The gentleman, whose name was Mr. Elmy, having made a polite apology for the liberty he had taken, proceeded to unfold his business. He said, information had been

lodged with him, as a justice of the peace, against two armed men on horseback, who had stopped five farmers on the king's highway, put them in fear and danger of their lives, and even assaulted, maimed, and wounded divers persons, contrary to the king's peace, and in violation of the statute: that, by the description, he supposed the knight and his companion to be the persons against whom the complaint had been lodged; and, understanding his quality from Mr. Clarke, whom he had known in London, he was come to wait on him, and, if possible, effect an accommodation.

Our adventurer, having thanked him for the polite and obliging manner in which he proceeded, frankly told him the whole story, as it had been just related by the captain; and Mr. Elmy had no reason to doubt the truth of the narrative, as it confirmed every circumstance which Clarke had before reported. Indeed, Tom had been very communicative to this gentleman, and made him acquainted with the history of sir Launcelot Greaves, as well as with the whimsical resolution of his uncle, captain Crowe. Mr. Elmy now told the knight, that the persons whom the captain had stopped were farmers returning from a neighbouring market; a set of people naturally boorish, and, at that time, elevated with ale to an uncommon pitch of insolence; that one of them, in particular, called Prickle, was the most quarrelsome fellow in the whole country; and so litigious, that he had maintained above thirty law-suits, in eight and twenty of which he had been condemned in costs. He said, the others might be easily influenced in the way of admonition; but there was no way of dealing with Prickle, except by the form and authority of the law: he therefore proposed to hear evidence in a judicial capacity; and, his clerk being in attendance, the court was immediately opened in the knight's apartment.

By this time Mr. Clarke had made such good use of his time in explaining the law to his audience, and displaying the great wealth and unbounded liberality of sir Launcelot Greaves, that he had actually brought over to his sentiments the constable, and the commonalty, tag-

rag and bob-tail, and even staggered the majority of the farmers, who at first had breathed nothing but defiance and revenge. Farmer Stake, being first called to the bar, and sworn touching the identity of sir Launcelot Greaves and captain Crowe, declared, that the said Crowe had stopped him on the king's highway, and put him in bodily fear: that he afterwards saw the said Crowe, with a pole or weapon, value threepence, breaking the king's peace, by committing assault and battery against the heads and shoulders of his majesty's liege subjects, Geoffrey Prickle, Hodge Dolt, Richard Bumpkin, Mary Fang, Katharine Rubble, and Margaret Litter; and that he saw sir Launcelot Greaves, baronet, aiding, assisting, and comforting the said Crowe, contrary to the king's peace, and against the form of the statute.

Being asked, if the defendant, when he stopped them, demanded their money, or threatened violence, he answered he could not say, inasmuch as the defendant spoke in an unknown language. Being interrogated, if the defendant did not allow them to pass without using any violence, and if they did not pass unmolested, the deponent replied in the affirmative. Being required to tell for what reason they returned, and if the defendant Crowe was not assaulted before he began to use his weapon, the deponent made no answer. The depositions of farmer Bumpkin and Muggins, as well as of Madge Litter and Mary Fang, were taken much to the same purpose; and his worship earnestly exhorted them to an accommodation, observing, that they themselves were in fact the aggressors, and that captain Crowe had done no more than exerted himself in his own defence.

They were all pretty well disposed to follow his advice, except farmer Prickle, who, entering the court with a bloody handkerchief about his head, declared that the law should determine it at next 'size; and, in the mean time, insisted, that the defendants should find immediate bail, or go to prison, or be set in the stocks. He affirmed, that they had not only been guilty of an affray, appearing with armour, and weapons, not usually worn,

to the terror of others, which is in itself a breach of the peace; but that they had, moreover, with force of arms, that is to say, with swords, staves, and other warlike instruments, by turns, made an assault and affray, to the terror and disturbance of him, and divers subjects of our lord the king, then and there being, and to the evil and pernicious example of the liege people of the said lord the king, and against the peace of our said lord the king, his crown and dignity.

This peasant had purchased a few law terms at a considerable expense, and he thought he had a right to turn his knowledge to the annoyance of all his neighbours. Mr. Elmy, finding him obstinately deaf to all proposals of accommodation, held the defendants to very moderate bail, the landlord and the curate of the parish freely offering themselves as sureties. Mr. Clarke, with Timothy Crabshaw, against whom nothing appeared, were now set at liberty; when the former, advancing to his worship, gave information against Geoffrey Prickle, and declared upon oath, that he had seen him assault captain Crowe without any provocation; and when he, the deponent, interposed to prevent farther mischief, the said Prickle had likewise assaulted and wounded him the deponent, and detained him for some time in false imprisonment, without warrant or authority.

In consequence of this information, which was corroborated by divers evidences, selected from the mob at the gate, the tables were turned upon farmer Prickle, who was given to understand, that he must either find bail, or be forthwith imprisoned. This honest boor, who was in opulent circumstances, had made such popular use of the benefits he possessed, that there was not a housekeeper in the parish, who would not have rejoiced to see him hanged: his dealings and connexions, however, were such, that none of the other four would have refused to bail him, had not Clarke given them to understand, that, if they did, he would make them all principals and parties, and have two separate actions against each. Prickle happened to be at variance with the innkeeper, and the curate durst not disoblige the vicar, who,

at that very time, was suing the farmer for the small tithes. He offered to deposit a sum equal to the recognisance of the knight's bail; but this was rejected, as an expedient contrary to the practice of the courts. He sent for the attorney of the village, to whom he had been a good customer; but the lawyer was hunting evidence in another county. The exciseman presented himself as a surety; but he, not being a housekeeper, was not accepted. Divers cottagers, who depended on farmer Prickle, were successively refused, because they could not prove that they had paid scot and lot, and parish taxes.

The farmer, finding himself thus forlorn, and in imminent danger of visiting the inside of a prison, was seized with a paroxysm of rage; during which he inveighed against the bench; reviled the two adventurers-errant; declared, that he believed, and would lay a wager of twenty guineas, that he had more money in his pocket than e'er a man in the company; and, in the space of a quarter of an hour, swore forty oaths, which the justice did not fail to number. 'Before we proceed to other matters,' said Mr. Elmy, 'I order you to pay forty shillings for the oaths you have sworn; otherwise I will cause you to be set in the stocks without farther ceremony.'

Prickle, throwing down a couple of guineas, with two execrations more, to make up the sum, declared, that he could afford to pay for swearing as well as e'er a justice in the county; and repeated his challenge of the wager, which our adventurer now accepted, protesting, at the same time, that it was not a step taken from any motive of pride, but entirely with a view to punish an insolent plebeian, who could not otherwise be chastised without a breach of the peace. Twenty guineas being deposited on each side in the hands of Mr. Elmy, Prickle, with equal confidence and despatch, produced a canvas bag, containing two hundred and seventy pounds; which, being spread upon the table, made a very formidable show, that dazzled the eyes of the beholders, and induced many of them to believe he had ensured his conquest.

Our adventurer, asking if he had any thing farther to

offer; and being answered in the negative, drew forth, with great deliberation, a pocket-book, in which there was a considerable parcel of bank-notes, from which he selected three of one hundred pounds each, and exhibited them upon the table, to the astonishment of all present. Prickle, mad with his overthrow and loss, said, it might be necessary to make him prove the notes were honestly come by. Sir Launcelot started up, in order to take vengeance upon him for this insult; but was withheld by the arms and remonstrances of Mr. Elmy, who assured him, that Prickle desired nothing so much as another broken head, to lay the foundation of a new prosecution.

The knight, calmed by this interposition, turned to the audience, saying, with the most affable deportment, ' Good people, do not imagine that I intend to pocket the spoils of such a contemptible rascal. I shall beg the favour of this worthy gentleman to take up these twenty guineas, and distribute them as he shall think proper, among the poor of the parish: but, by this benefaction, I do not hold myself acquitted for the share I had in the bruises some of you received in this unlucky fray; and therefore I give the other twenty guineas to be divided among the sufferers, to each according to the damage he or she shall appear to have sustained; and I shall consider it as an additional obligation, if Mr. Elmy will likewise superintend this retribution.'

At the close of this address, the whole yard and gateway rung with acclamation; while honest Crowe, whose generosity was not inferior even to that of the accomplished Greaves, pulled out his purse, and declared, that, as he had begun the engagement, he would, at least, go share and share alike in new-caulking their seams, and repairing their timbers. The knight, rather than enter into a dispute with his novice, told him, he considered the twenty guineas as given by them both in conjunction, and that they would confer together on that subject hereafter.

This point being adjusted, Mr. Elmy assumed all the solemnity of the magistrate, and addressed himself to Prickle in these words: ' Farmer Prickle, I am both



sorry and ashamed to see a man of your years and circumstances so little respected, that you cannot find sufficient bail for forty pounds; a sure testimony, that you have neither cultivated the friendship, nor deserved the good-will of your neighbours. I have heard of your quarrels and your riots, your insolence and litigious disposition; and often wished for an opportunity of giving you a proper taste of the law's correction. That opportunity now offers. You have, in the hearing of all these people, poured forth a torrent of abuse against me, both in the character of a gentleman and of a magistrate: your abusing me personally, perhaps I should have overlooked with the contempt it deserves; but I should ill vindicate the dignity of my office as a magistrate, by suffering you to insult the bench with impunity: I shall, therefore, imprison you for contempt, and you shall remain in jail until you can find bail on the other prosecutions."

Prickle, the first transports of his anger having subsided, began to be pricked with the thorns of compunction. He was, indeed, exceedingly mortified at the prospect of being sent to jail so disgracefully: his countenance fell; and, after a hard internal struggle, while the clerk was employed in writing the mittimus, he said, he hoped his worship would not send him to prison: he begged pardon of him and our adventurers for having abused them in his passion; and observed, that, as he had received a broken head, and paid two and twenty guineas for his folly, he could not be said to have escaped altogether without punishment, even if the plaintiff should agree to exchange releases.

Sir Launcelot, seeing this stubborn rustic effectually humbled, became an advocate in his favour with Mr. Elmy and Tom Clarke, who forgave him at his request; and a mutual release being executed, the farmer was permitted to depart. The populace were regaled at our adventurer's expense; and the men, women, and children, who had been wounded or bruised in the battle, to the number of ten or a dozen, were desired to wait upon Mr. Elmy in the morning, to receive the knight's bounty. The justice was prevailed upon to spend the evening with

sir Launcelot and his two companions, for whom supper was bespoken ; but the first thing the cook prepared, was a poultice for Crowe's head, which was now enlarged to a monstrous exhibition. Our knight, who was all kindness and complacency, shook Mr. Clarke by the hand, expressed his satisfaction at meeting with his old friends again, and told him, softly, that he had compliments for him from Miss Dolly Cowslip, who now lived with his Aurelia.

Clarke was confounded at this intelligence ; and, after some hesitation. 'Lord bless my soul !' cried he, 'I'll be shot, then, if the pretended Miss Meadows wa'n't the same as Miss Darnel !' He then declared himself extremely glad that poor Dolly had got into such an agreeable situation, passed many warm encomiums on her goodness of heart and virtuous inclinations, and concluded with appealing to the knight, whether she did not look very pretty in her green joseph. In the mean time, he procured a plaster for his own head, and helped to apply the poultice to that of his uncle, who was sent to bed betimes, with a moderate dose of sack-whey, to promote perspiration. The other three passed the evening to their mutual satisfaction ; and the justice, in particular, grew enamoured of the knight's character, dashed as it was with extravagance.

Let us now leave them to the enjoyment of a sober and rational conversation, and give some account of other guests who arrived late in the evening, and here fixed their night-quarters. But, as we have already trespassed on the reader's patience, we shall give him a short respite, until the next chapter makes its appearance.

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CHAP. XVIII.—In which the rays of chivalry shine with renovated lustre.

Our hero little dreamed that he had a formidable rival in the person of the knight, who arrived about eleven at the sign of the St. George ; and, by the noise he made, gave intimation of his importance. This was no other

than squire Sycamore, who, having received advice that Miss Aurelia Darnel had eloped from the place of her retreat, immediately took the field in quest of that lovely fugitive, hoping, that, should he have the good fortune to find her in her present distress, his good offices would not be rejected. He had followed the chace so close, that, immediately after our adventurer's departure, he alighted at the inn from whence Aurelia had been conveyed; and there he learned the particulars which we have related above. Mr. Sycamore had a great deal of the childish romantic in his disposition; and, in the course of his amours, is said to have always taken more pleasure in the pursuit than in the final possession. He had heard of sir Launcelot's extravagance, by which he was, in some measure, infected; and he dropped an insinuation, that he could eclipse his rival, even in his own lunatic sphere. This hint was not lost upon his companion, counsellor, and buffoon, the facetious Davy Dawdle, who had some humour, and a great deal of mischief in his composition. He looked upon his patron as a fool, and his patron knew him to be both knave and fool; yet the two characters suited each other so well, that they could hardly exist asunder. Davy was an artful sycophant; but he did not flatter in the usual way: on the contrary, he behaved *en cavalier*, and treated Sycamore, on whose bounty he subsisted, with the most sarcastic familiarity. Nevertheless, he seasoned his freedom with certain qualifying ingredients, that subdued the bitterness of it; and was now become so necessary to the squire, that he had no idea of enjoyment, with which Dawdle was not somehow or other connected. There had been a warm dispute betwixt them about the scheme of contesting the prize with sir Launcelot in the lists of chivalry. Sycamore had insinuated, that, if he had a mind to play the fool, he could wear armour, wield a lance, and manage a charger as well as sir Launcelot Greaves. Dawdle, snatching the hint, 'I had, some time ago,' said he, 'contrived a scheme for you, which I was afraid you had not address enough to execute. It would be no difficult matter, in imitation of the bachelor Sampson Carrasco, to go in quest of

Greaves as a knight-errant, defy him as a rival, and establish a compact, by which the vanquished should obey the injunctions of the victor.—‘That is my very idea,’ cried Sycamore. ‘Your idea!’ replied the other: ‘had you ever an idea of your own conception?’ Thus the dispute began, and was maintained with great vehemence; until, other arguments failing, the squire offered to lay a wager of twenty guineas. To this proposal Dawdle answered by the interjection, *Pish!* which inflamed Sycamore to a repetition of the defiance. ‘You are in the right,’ said Dawdle, ‘to use such an argument, as you know is by me unanswerable. A wager of twenty guineas will, at any time, overthrow and confute all the logic of the most able syllogist, who has not got a shilling in his pocket.’

Sycamore looked very grave at this declaration; and, after a short pause, said, ‘I wonder, Dawdle, what you do with all your money.’—‘I am surprised you should give yourself that trouble: I never ask what you do with yours.’—‘You have no occasion to ask: you know pretty well how it goes.’—‘What! do you upbraid me with your favours? ’tis mighty well, Sycamore.’—‘Nay, Dawdle, I did not intend to affront.’—‘Zounds! affront! what d’ye mean?’—‘I’ll assure you, Davy, you don’t know me, if you think I could be so ungenerous as to—a—to—’—‘I always thought, whatever faults or foibles you might have, Sycamore, that you was not deficient in generosity; though, to be sure, it is often very absurdly displayed.’—‘Ay, that’s one of my greatest foibles: I can’t refuse even a scoundrel, when I think he’s in want: here, Dawdle, take that note.’—‘Not I, sir: what d’ye mean? what right have I to your notes?’—‘Nay, but, Dawdle,—come—’—‘By no means; it looks like the abuse of good-nature: all the world knows you’re good-natured to a fault.’—‘Come, dear Davy, you shall—you must oblige me.’ Thus urged, Dawdle accepted the bank-note with great reluctance, and restored the idea to the right owner.

A suit of armour being brought from the garret or armoury of his ancestors, he gave orders for having the

pieces scoured and furbished up; and his heart dilated with joy, when he reflected upon the superb figure he should make, when cased in complete steel, and armed at all points for the combat.

When he was fitted with the other parts, Dawdle insisted on buckling on his helmet, which weighed fifteen pounds; and, the head-piece being adjusted, made such a clatter about his ears with a cudgel, that his eyes had almost started from their sockets. His voice was lost within the vizor, and his friend affected not to understand his meaning when he made signs with his gauntlet, and endeavoured to close with him, that he might wrest the cudgel from his hand. At length he desisted, saying, 'I'll warrant the helmet sound, by its ringing;' and, taking it off, found the squire in a cold sweat. He would have achieved his first exploit on the spot, had his strength permitted him to assault Dawdle; but, what with want of air, and the discipline he had undergone, he had well nigh swooned away; and, before he retrieved the use of his members, he was appeased by the apologies of his companion, who protested he meant nothing more than to try if the helmet was free of cracks, and whether or not it would prove a good protection for the head it covered. His excuses were accepted: the armour was packed up; and next morning Mr. Sycamore set out from his own house, accompanied by Dawdle, who undertook to perform the part of his squire at the approaching combat: he was also attended by a servant on horseback, who had charge of the armour, and another who blew the trumpet. They no sooner understood that our hero was housed at the George, than the trumpeter sounded a charge, which alarmed sir Launcelot and his company, and disturbed honest captain Crowe in the middle of his first sleep. Their next step was to pen a challenge, which, when the stranger departed, was, by the trumpeter, delivered with great ceremony into the hands of sir Launcelot, who read it in these words: 'To the knight of the Crescent, greeting: Whereas I am informed you have the presumption to lay claim to the heart of the peerless Aurelia Darnel, I give you notice;

that I can admit no rivalry in the affection of that paragon of beauty; and I expect that you will either resign your pretensions, or make it appear in single combat, according to the law of arms, and the institutions of chivalry, that you are worthy to dispute her favour with him of the Griffin. Polydore.'

Our adventurer was not a little surprised at this address, which, however, he pocketed in silence; and began to reflect, not without mortification, that he was treated as a lunatic by some person, who wanted to amuse himself with the infirmities of his fellow-creatures. Mr. Thomas Clarke, who saw the ceremony with which the letter was delivered, and the emotions with which it was read, bled him to the kitchen for intelligence, and there learned that the stranger was squire Sycamore: he forthwith comprehended the nature of the billet; and, in the apprehension that bloodshed would ensue, resolved to alarm his uncle, that he might assist in keeping the peace. He accordingly entered the apartment of the captain, who had been waked by the trumpet, and now peevishly asked the meaning of that d—d piping, as if all hands were called upon deck. Clarke having imparted what he knew of the transaction, together with his own conjectures, the captain said, he did not suppose as how they would engage by candle-light; and that, for his own part, he should turn out in the larboard watch, long enough before any signals could be hoisted for forming the line. With this assurance, the lawyer retired to his nest, where he did not fail to dream of Miss Dolly Cowslip; while sir Launcelot passed the night awake, in ruminating on the strange challenge he had received. He had got notice that the sender was Mr. Sycamore, and hesitated with himself whether he should not punish him for his impertinence; but when he reflected on the nature of the dispute, and the serious consequences it might produce, he resolved to decline the combat, as a trial of right and merit, founded upon absurdity. Even in his maddest hours, he never adopted those maxims of knight-errantry which related to challenges: he always perceived the folly and wickedness of defying a man to mortal fight,

because he did not like the colour of his beard, or the complexion of his mistress; or of deciding by homicide, whether he or his rival deserved the preference, when it was the lady's prerogative to determine which should be the happy lover. It was his opinion, that chivalry was a useful institution, while confined to its original purposes, of protecting the innocent, assisting the friendless, and bringing the guilty to condign punishment; but he could not conceive how these laws should be answered, by violating every suggestion of reason, and every precept of humanity. Captain Crowe did not examine the matter so philosophically. He took it for granted, that, in the morning, the two knights would come to action, and slept sound on that supposition: but he rose before it was day, resolved to be somehow concerned in the fray; and, understanding that the stranger had a companion, set him down immediately for his own antagonist. So impatient was he to establish this secondary contest, that, by day-break, he entered the chamber of Dawdle, to which he was directed by the waiter, and roused him with a hilloa, that might have been heard at the distance of half a league. Dawdle, startled by this terrific sound, sprung out of bed, and stood upright on the floor, before he opened his eyes upon the object by which he had been so dreadfully alarmed: but, when he beheld the head of Crowe, so swelled and swathed, so livid, hideous, and grisly, with a broad sword by his side, and a case of pistols in his girdle, he believed it was the apparition of some murdered man: his hair bristled up, his teeth chattered, and his knees knocked; he would have prayed, but his tongue denied its office. Crowe, seeing his perturbation, 'Mayhap, friend,' said he, 'you take me for a buccaneer; but I am no such person. My name is captain Crowe: I come not for your silver nor your gold, your rigging nor your stowage; but hearing as how your friend intends to bring my friend sir Launcelot Greaves to action, d'ye see; I desire, in the way of friendship, that while they are engaged, you and I, as their seconds, may lie board and board for a few glasses, to divert one another, d'ye see.' Dawdle, hearing this request, began to retrieve

his faculties ; and, throwing himself into the attitude of Hamlet, when the ghost appears, exclaimed, in theatrical accent,—

Angels and ministers of grace defend us !  
Art thou a spirit of grace, or goblin damn'd ?

As he seemed to bend his eye on vacancy, the captain began to think that he really saw something preternatural, and stared wildly around. Then, addressing himself to the terrified Dawdle, ‘ Damn’d ? ’ said he ; ‘ for what should I be damn’d ? if you are afraid of goblins, brother, put your trust in the Lord, and he ’ll prove a sheet-anchor to you.’ The other, having by this time recollected himself perfectly, continued, notwithstanding, to spout tragedy ; and, in the words of Macbeth, pronounced,—

What man dare, I dare :  
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,  
The arm’d rhinoceros, or Hyrcanian tiger ;  
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves  
Shall never tremble.

‘ Ware names, Jack,’ cried the impatient mariner ; ‘ if so be as how you’ll bear a hand, and rig yourself, and take a short trip with me into the offing, we’ll overhaul this here affair in the turning of a capstan.’

At this juncture they were joined by Mr. Sycamore, in his night-gown and slippers. Disturbed by Crowe’s first salute, he had sprung up ; and now expressed no small astonishment at the first sight of the novice’s countenance. After having gazed alternately at him and Dawdle, ‘ Who have we got here ? ’ said he ; ‘ raw head and bloody bones ? ’ When his friend, slipping on his clothes, gave him to understand, that this was a friend of sir Launcelot Greaves, and explained the purport of his errand, he treated him with more civility. He assured him, that he should have the pleasure to break a spear with Mr. Dawdle, and signified his surprise that sir Launcelot had made no answer to his letter. It being by this time clear day-light, and Crowe extremely interested in this affair, he broke without ceremony into the knight’s chamber, and told him abruptly, that the enemy had brought to, and waited for his coming up, in order to begin the action,



‘I’ve hailed his consort,’ said he, ‘a shambling, chattering fellow: he took me first for a hobgoblin, then called me names, a tiker, a wrynose o’rose, and a Persian bear: but, egad, if I come athwart him, I’ll make him look like the bear and ragged staff before we part, I wool.’

This intimation was not received with that alacrity which the captain expected to find in our adventurer, who told him, in a peremptory tone, that he had no design to come to action, and desired to be left to his repose. Crowe forthwith retired, crest-fallen, and muttered something, which was never distinctly heard.

About eight in the morning, Mr. Dawdle brought him a formal message from the knight of the Griffin, desiring he would appoint the lists, and give security of the field: to which request he made answer, in a very composed and solemn accent, ‘If the person who sent you thinks I have injured him, let him, without disguise, or any such ridiculous ceremony, explain the nature of the wrong; and then I shall give such satisfaction as may suit my conscience and my character. If he has bestowed his affection upon any particular object, and looks upon me as a favoured rival, I shall not wrong the lady so much as to take any step that may prejudice her choice, especially a step that contradicts my own reason, as much as it would outrage the laws of my country. If he, who calls himself knight of the Griffin, is really desirous of treading in the paths of true chivalry, he will not want opportunities of signalizing his valour in the cause of virtue: should he, notwithstanding this declaration, offer violence to me in the course of my occasions, he will always find me in a posture of defence; or, should he persist in repeating his importunities, I shall, without ceremony, chastise the messenger.’ His declining the combat was interpreted into fear by Mr. Sycamore, who now became more insolent and ferocious, on the supposition of our knight’s timidity. Sir Launcelot, meanwhile, went to breakfast with his friends; and, having put on his armour, ordered the horses to be brought forth. Then he paid the bill, and, walking deliberately to the gate, in presence of squire Sycamore and his attendants, vaulted at once into the saddle of Bronzomarte, whose neighing

and curveting proclaimed the joy he felt in being mounted by his accomplished master.

Though the knight of the Griffin did not think proper to insult his rival personally, his friend Dawdle did not fail to crack some jokes on the figure and horsemanship of Crowe, who again declared he should be glad to fall in with him upon the voyage; nor did Mr. Clarke's black patch and rueful countenance pass unnoticed and unridiculed. As for Timothy Crabshaw, he beheld his brother squire with the contempt of a veteran, and Gilbert paid him his compliments with his heels at parting; but when our adventurer and his retinue were clear of the inn, Mr. Sycamore ordered his trumpeter to sound a retreat, by way of triumph over his antagonist. Perhaps he would have contented himself with this kind of victory, had not Dawdle farther inflamed his envy and ambition, by launching out in praise of sir Launcelot. He observed, that his countenance was open and manly, his joints strongly knit, and his form unexceptionable; that he trod like Hercules, and vaulted into the saddle like a winged Mercury: nay, he even hinted, it was lucky for Sycamore, that the knight of the Crescent happened to be so pacifically disposed. His patron sickened at these praises, and took fire at the last observation. He affected to undervalue personal beauty, though the opinion of the world had been favourable to himself in that particular: he said he was at least two inches taller than Greaves; and as to shape and air, he would make no comparisons; but with respect to riding, he was sure he had a better seat than sir Launcelot; and would wager five hundred to fifty guineas, that he would unhorse him at the first encounter. 'There is no occasion for laying wagers,' replied Mr. Dawdle: 'the doubt may be determined in half an hour: sir Launcelot is not a man to avoid you at full gallop.' Sycamore, after some hesitation, declared he would follow and provoke him to battle, on condition that Dawdle would engage Crowe, and this condition was accepted; for though Davy had no stomach to the trial, he could not readily find an excuse for declining it: besides, he had discovered the captain to be a very bad

horseman, and resolved to eke out his own scanty valour with a border of ingenuity. The servants were immediately ordered to unpack the armour, and, in a little time, Mr. Sycamore made a very formidable appearance. But the scene that followed is too important to be huddled in at the end of a chapter, and therefore we shall reserve it for a more conspicuous place in these memoirs.

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CHAP. XIX.—Containing the achievements of the knights of the Griffin and Crescent.

Mr. Sycamore, alias the knight of the Griffin, so denominated from a griffin painted on his shield, being armed at all points, and his friend Dawdle provided with a certain implement, which, he flattered himself, would ensure a victory over the novice Crowe; they set out from the George, with their attendants, in all the elevation of hope, and pranced along the highway that led towards London, that being the road which our adventurer pursued. As they were extremely well mounted, and proceeded at a round pace, they, in less than two hours, came up with sir Launcelot and his company; and Sycamore sent another formal defiance to the knight, by his trumpeter; Dawdle having, for good reasons, declined that office.

Our adventurer, hearing himself thus addressed, and seeing his rival, who had passed him, posted to obstruct his progress, armed cap-a-pie, with his lance in the rest, determined to give the satisfaction that was required, and desired that the regulations of the combat might be established. The knight of the Griffin proposed, that the vanquished party should resign all pretensions to Miss Aurelia Darnel, in favour of the victor; that while the principals were engaged, his friend Dawdle should run a tilt with captain Crowe; that squire Crabshaw, and Mr. Sycamore's servant, should keep themselves in readiness to assist their respective masters occasionally, according to the law of arms; and that Mr. Clarke should observe

the motions of the trumpeter, whose province was to sound the charge to battle.

Our knight agreed to these regulations, notwithstanding the earnest and pathetic remonstrances of the young lawyer, who, with tears in his eyes, conjured all the combatants, in their turns, to refrain from an action that might be attended with bloodshed and murder, and was contrary to the laws both of God and man. In vain he endeavoured to move them by tears and entreaties, by threatening them with prosecutions in this world, and pains and penalties in the next: they persisted in their resolutions; and his uncle would have begun hostilities on his carcass, had he not been prevented by sir Launcelot, who exhorted Clarke to retire from the field, that he might not be involved in the consequences of the combat. He relished this advice so well, that he had actually moved off to some distance; but his apprehension and concern for his friends, co-operating with an insatiable curiosity, detained him in sight of the engagement.

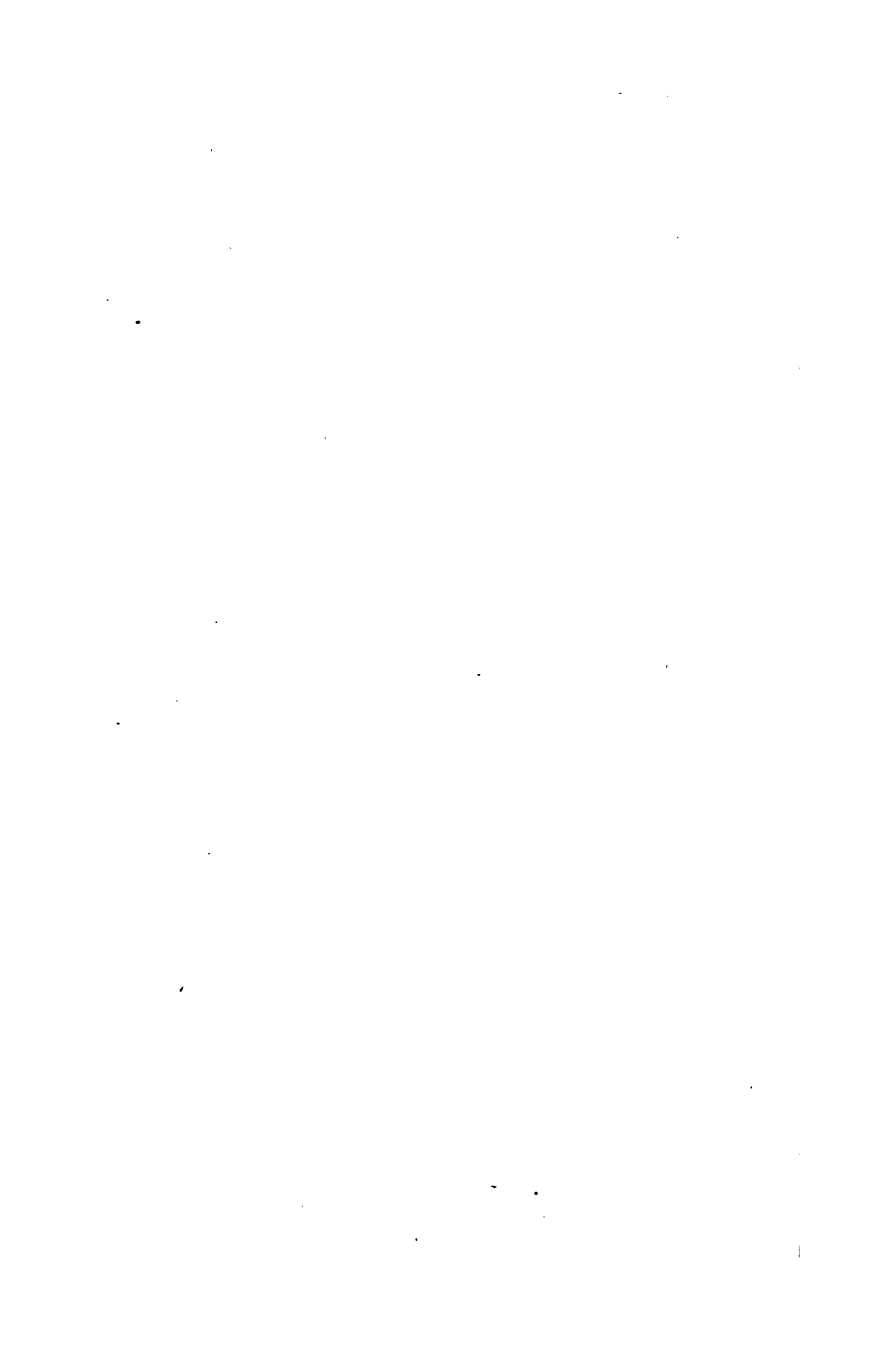
The two knights, having fairly divided the ground, and the same precaution being taken by the seconds, on another part of the field, Sycamore began to be invaded with some scruples, which were probably engendered by the martial appearance and well-known character of his antagonist. The confidence, which he had derived from the reluctance of sir Launcelot, now vanished, because it plainly appeared, that the knight's backwardness was not owing to personal timidity; and he foresaw that the prosecution of this joke might be attended with very serious consequences to his own life and reputation. He therefore desired a parley, in which he observed, his affection for Miss Darnel was of such a delicate nature, that, should the discomfiture of his rival contribute to make her unhappy, his victory must render him the most miserable wretch upon earth: he proposed, therefore, that her sentiments and choice should be ascertained before they proceeded to extremity.

Sir Launcelot declared, that he was much more afraid of combating Aurelia's inclination, than of opposing the

knight of the Griffin in arms; and, that if he had the least reason to think Mr. Sycamore, or any other person, was distinguished by her preference, he would instantly give up his suit as desperate. At the same time, he observed, that Sycamore had proceeded too far to retract; that he had insulted a gentleman, and not only challenged, but even pursued him, and blocked up his passage in the public highway; outrages, which he, sir Launcelot, would not suffer to pass unpunished. Accordingly, he insisted on the combat, on pain of treating Mr. Sycamore as a craven and a recreant. This declaration was re-enforced by Dawdle, who told him, that, should he now decline the engagement, all the world would look upon him as an infamous poltroon.

These two observations gave a necessary fillip to the courage of the challenger. The parties took their stations: the trumpet sounded the charge, and the combatants began their career with great impetuosity. Whether the gleam of sir Launcelot's arms affrighted Mr. Sycamore's steed, or some other object had an unlucky effect on his eye-sight, certain it is he started at about mid-way, and gave his rider such a violent shock, as discomposed his attitude, and disabled him from using his lance to the best advantage. Had our hero continued his career, with his lance couched, in all probability Sycamore's armour would have proved but a bad defence to his carcass: but sir Launcelot, perceiving his rival's spear unrested, had just time to throw up the point of his own, when the two horses closed with such a shock, that Sycamore, already wavering in the saddle, was overthrown, and his armour crashed around him as he fell.

The victor, seeing him lie without motion, alighted immediately, and began to unbuckle his helmet, in which office he was assisted by the trumpeter. When the head-piece was removed, the hapless knight of the Griffin appeared in the pale livery of death, though he was only in a swoon, from which he soon recovered by the effect of the fresh air, and the aspersion of cold water, brought from a small pool in the neighbourhood. When he recognised his conqueror doing the offices of humanity





*Dawdles' Victory over Capt.<sup>m</sup> Crowe.*

*London, Printed for James Cochrane & Co 1832*







about his person, he closed his eyes from vexation ; told sir Launcelot that his was the fortune of the day, though he himself owed his mischance to the fault of his own horse ; and observed, that this ridiculous affair would not have happened, but for the mischievous instigation of that scoundrel Dawdle, on whose ribs he threatened to revenge his mishap.

Perhaps captain Crowe might have saved him that trouble, had that wag honourably adhered to the institutions of chivalry, in his conflict with our novice : but, on this occasion, his ingenuity was more commendable than his courage. He had provided at the inn a blown bladder, in which several smooth pebbles were enclosed ; and this he slyly fixed to the head of his pole, when the captain obeyed the signal to battle. Instead of bearing the brunt of the encounter, he turned out of the straight line, so as to avoid the lance of his antagonist, and rattled his bladder with such effect, that Crowe's horse, pricking up his ears, took to his heels, and fled across some ploughed land with such precipitation, that the rider was obliged to quit his spear, and lay fast hold on the mane, that he might not be thrown out of the saddle. Dawdle, who was much better mounted, seeing his condition, rode up to the unfortunate novice, and belaboured his shoulders without fear of retaliation. Mr. Clarke, seeing his kinsman so roughly handled, forgot his fears, and flew to his assistance ; but, before he came up, the aggressor had retired ; and now, perceiving that fortune had declared against his friend and patron, very honourably abandoned him in his distress, and went off at full speed for London.

Nor was Timothy Crabshaw without his share in the noble achievements of this propitious day. He had by this time imbibed such a tincture of errantry, that he firmly believed himself and his master equally invincible ; and this belief operating upon a perverse disposition, rendered him as quarrelsome in his sphere as his master was mild and forbearing. As he sat on horseback, in the place assigned to him and Sycamore's lacquey, he managed Gilbert in such a manner, as to invade with his

heels the posteriors of the other's horse; and this insult produced some altercation, which ended in mutual assault. The footman handled the butt-end of his horse-whip with great dexterity about the head of Crabshaw, who declared afterwards, that it sung and simmered like a kettle of cod-fish; but the squire, who understood the nature of long lashes, as having been a carter from his infancy, found means to twine his thong about the neck of his antagonist, and pull him off his horse half-strangled, at the very instant his master was thrown by sir Launcelot Greaves.

Having thus obtained the victory, he did not much regard the punctilios of chivalry; but, taking it for granted he had a right to make the most of his advantage, resolved to carry off the *spolia opima*. Alighting with great agility, 'Brother,' cried he, 'I think as haw yaws bean't a butcher's horse; a doan't carry calves well: I'se make yaw know your churning days, I wool. What, yaw look as if yaw was crow-trodden, you do: now, you shall pay the score you have been running on my peate, you shall, brother.'

So saying, he rifled his pockets, stripped him of his hat and coat, and took possession of his master's portmanteau. But he did not long enjoy his plunder; for the lacquey complaining to sir Launcelot of his having been despoiled, the knight commanded his squire to refund, not without menaces of subjecting him to the severest chastisement for his injustice and rapacity. Timothy represented, with great vehemence, that he had won the spoils in fair battle, at the expense of his head and shoulders, which he immediately uncovered, to prove his allegation: but his remonstrance having no effect upon his master, 'Wounds,' cried he, 'an I mun gee thee back the pig, I'se gee thee back the poke also; I'm a drubbing still in thy debt.'

With these words, he made a most furious attack upon the plaintiff with his horsewhip, and, before the knight could interpose, repaid the lacquey with interest. As an appurtenance to Sycamore and Dawdle, he ran the risk of another assault from the novice Crowe, who was so ported with rage at the disagreeable trick which had

been played upon him by his fugitive antagonist, that he could not, for some time, pronounce an articulate sound, but a few broken interjections, the meaning of which could not be ascertained. Snatching up his pole, he ran towards the place where Mr. Sycamore sat on the grass, supported by the trumpeter, and would have finished what our adventurer had left undone, if the knight of the Crescent, with admirable dexterity, had not warded off the blow which he aimed at the knight of the Griffin, and signified his displeasure in a resolute tone: then he collared the lacquey, who was just disengaged from the chastising hand of Crabshaw; and, swinging his lance with his other hand, encountered the squire's ribs by accident.

Timothy was not slow in returning the salutation, with the weapon which he still wielded: Mr. Clarke, running up to the assistance of his uncle, was opposed by the lacquey, who seemed extremely desirous of seeing the enemy revenge his quarrel, by falling foul of one another. Clarke, thus impeded, commenced hostilities against the footman, while Crowe grappled with Crabshaw: a battle-royal ensued, and was maintained with great vigour, and some bloodshed on all sides, until the authority of sir Launcelot, re-enforced by some weighty remonstrances applied to the squire, put an end to the conflict. Crabshaw immediately desisted, and ran roaring to communicate his grievances to Gilbert, who seemed to sympathize very little with his distress; the lacquey took to his heels; Mr. Clarke wiped his bloody nose, declaring he had a good mind to put the aggressor in the Crown-office; and captain Crowe continued to ejaculate unconnected oaths, which, however, seemed to imply that he was almost sick of his new profession: 'D—n it, if you call this—start my timbers, brother—look ye, d'ye see—a lousy, lubberly, cowardly son of a—among the breakers, d'ye see—lost my steerage way—split my binacle! haul away—O! d—n all arrantry: give me a tight vessel, d'ye see, brother—mayhap you may'nt—snatch my—sea room and a spanking gale—odds heart,

I'll hold a whole year's—smite my limbs—it don't signify talking——,

Our hero consoled the novice for his disaster, by observing, that if he had got some blows, he had lost no honour. At the same time, he observed that it was very difficult, if not impossible, for a man to succeed in the paths of chivalry, who had passed the better part of his days in other occupations; and hinted, that as the cause which had engaged him in this way of life no longer existed, he was determined to relinquish a profession, which, in a peculiar manner, exposed him to the most disagreeable incidents. Crowe chewed the cud upon this insinuation, while the other personages of the drama were employed in catching the horses, which had given their riders the slip. As for Mr. Sycamore, he was so bruised by his fall, that it was necessary to procure a litter for conveying him to the next town; and the servant was despatched for this convenience, sir Launcelot staying with him until it arrived.

When he was safely deposited in the carriage, our hero took leave of him in these terms:—‘I shall not insist upon your submitting to the terms you yourself proposed before this rencounter: I give you free leave to use all your advantages, in an honourable way, for promoting your suit with the young lady, of whom you profess yourself enamoured. Should you have recourse to sinister practices, you will find sir Launcelot Greaves ready to demand an account of your conduct, not in the character of a lunatic knight-errant, but as a plain English gentleman, jealous of his honour, and resolute in his purpose.’

To this address Mr. Sycamore made no reply, but with a sullen aspect ordered the carriage to proceed; and it moved accordingly to the right, our hero's road to London lying in the other direction. Sir Launcelot had already exchanged his armour for a riding coat, hat, and boots; and Crowe, parting with his skull-cap and leathern jerkin, regained in some respects the appearance of a human creature. Thus metamorphosed, they pursued their way in an easy pace, Mr. Clarke endeavouring to amuse

them with a learned dissertation on the law, tending to demonstrate, that Mr. Sycamore was, by his behaviour of that day, liable to three different actions, besides a commission of lunacy; and that Dawdle might be prosecuted for having practised subtle craft, to the annoyance of his uncle, over and above an action for assault and battery; because, for why? The said Crowe having run away, as might be easily proved, before any blows were given, the said Dawdle, by pursuing him even out of the high road, putting him in fear, and committing battery on his body, became, to all intents and purposes, the aggressor, and an indictment would lie in *Banco Regis*.

The captain's pride was so shocked at these observations, that he exclaimed, with equal rage and impatience; 'You lie, you dog, in *Bilkum Regis*: you lie, I say, you lubber: I did not run away; nor was I in fear, d'ye see. It was my son of a bitch of a horse that would not obey the helm, d'ye see, whereby I couldn't use my mettle, d'ye see. As for the matter of fear, you and fear may kiss my ——: so don't go and heave your stink-pots at my character, d'ye see, or egad I'll trim thee fore and aft with a ——, I wool.' Tom protested he meant nothing but a little speculation, and Crowe was appeased.

In the evening they reached the town of Bugden, without any farther adventure, and passed the night in great tranquillity. Next morning, even after the horses were ordered to be saddled, Mr. Clarke, without ceremony, entered the apartment of sir Launcelot, leading in a female, who proved to be the identical Miss Dolly Cowslip. This young woman, advancing to the knight, cried, 'O, sir Launcelot! my dear leady, my dear leady;' but was hindered from proceeding by a flood of tears, which the tender-hearted lawyer mingled with a plentiful shower of sympathy.

Our adventurer, starting at this exclamation, 'O heavens!' cried he, 'where is my Aurelia? speak, where did you leave the jewel of my soul? answer me in a moment: I am all terror and impatience.' Dolly, having recollected herself, told him, that Mr. Darnel had lodged his niece in the new buildings by May-fair; that,

on the second night after their arrival, a very warm expostulation had passed between Aurelia and her uncle, who next morning dismissed Dolly, without permitting her to take leave of her mistress, and that same day moved to another part of the town, as she afterwards learned of the landlady, though she could not inform her whither they were gone; that, when she was turned away, John Clump, one of the footmen, who pretended to have a kindness for her, had faithfully promised to call upon her, and let her know what passed in the family; but as he did not keep his word, and she was an utter stranger in London, without friends or settlement, she had resolved to return to her mother, and travelled so far on foot since yesterday morning.

Our knight, who had expected the most dismal tidings from her lamentable preamble, was pleased to find his presaging fears disappointed, though he was far from being satisfied with the dismissal of Dolly, from whose attachment to his interest, joined to her influence over Mr. Clump, he had hoped to reap such intelligence as would guide him to the haven of his desires. After a minute's reflection, he saw it would be expedient to carry back Miss Cowslip, and lodge her at the place where Mr. Clump had promised to visit her with intelligence; for, in all probability, it was not for want of inclination that he had not kept his promise.

Dolly did not express any aversion to the scheme of returning to London, where she hoped once more to rejoin her dear lady, to whom, by this time, she was attached by the strongest ties of affection; and her inclination, in this respect, was assisted by the consideration of having the company of the young lawyer, who, it plainly appeared, had made strange havoc in her heart; though, it must be owned, for the honour of this blooming damsel, that her thoughts had never once deviated from the path of innocence and virtue. The more sir Launcelot surveyed this agreeable maiden, the more he felt himself disposed to take care of her fortune; and from this day he began to ruminate on a scheme which was afterwards consummated in her favour. In the mean time, he laid

injunctions on Mr. Clarke to conduct his addresses to Miss Cowslip according to the rules of honour and decorum, as he valued his countenance and friendship. His next step was to procure a saddle-horse for Dolly, who preferred this to any other sort of carriage; and thereby gratified the wish of her admirer, who longed to see her on horseback in her green jockey.

The armour, including the accoutrements of the novice and the squire, were left to the care of the innkeeper; and Timothy Crabshaw was so metamorphosed by a plain livery frock, that even Gilbert with difficulty recognised his person. As for the novice Crowe, his head had almost resumed its natural dimensions: but then his whole face was so covered with a livid suffusion; his nose appeared so flat, and his lips so tumified, that he might very well have passed for a Caffre or Ethiopian. Every circumstance being now adjusted, they departed from Bugden in a regular cavalcade, dined at Hatfield, and, in the evening, arrived at the Bull and Gate inn in Holborn, where they established their quarters for the night.

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CHAP. XX.—In which our hero descends into the mansions of the damned.

The first step which sir Launcelot took in the morning that succeeded his arrival in London, was to settle Miss Dolly Cowslip in lodgings at the house where John Clump had promised to visit her; as he did not doubt, that, though the visit was delayed, it would some time or other be performed; and, in that case, he might obtain some intelligence of Aurelia. Mr. Thomas Clarke was permitted to take up his habitation in the same house, on his earnestly desiring he might be entrusted with the office of conveying information and instruction between Dolly and our adventurer. The knight himself resolved to live retired, until he should receive some tidings relating to Miss Darnel, that would influence his conduct; but he proposed to frequent places of public resort in-



cognito, that he might have some chance of meeting by accident with the mistress of his heart. Taking it for granted, that the oddities of Crowe would help to amuse him in his hours of solitude and disappointment, he invited that original to be his guest at a small house, which he determined to hire ready furnished, in the neighbourhood of Golden-square. The captain thanked him for his courtesy, and frankly embraced his offer; though he did not much approve of the knight's choice, in point of situation: he said, he would recommend him to a special good upper deck, hard by St. Katharine's, in Wapping, where he would be delighted with the prospect of the street forwards, well frequented by passengers, carts, drays, and other carriages; and having, backwards, an agreeable view of alderman Parsons' great brewhouse, with two hundred hogs feeding almost under the window. As a farther inducement, he mentioned the vicinity of the Tower guns, which would regale his hearing on days of salutation; nor did he forget the sweet sound of mooring and unmooring ships in the river, and the pleasing objects on the other side of the Thames, displayed in the oozy docks and cabbage-gardens of Rotherhithe. Sir Launcelot was not insensible to the beauties of this landscape; but, his pursuit lying another way, he contented himself with a less enchanting situation, and Crowe accompanied him out of pure friendship. At night, Mr. Clarke arrived at our hero's house with tidings that were by no means agreeable. He told him, that Clump had left a letter for Dolly, informing her, that his master, squire Darnel, was to set out early in the morning for Yorkshire; but he could give no account of her lady, who had, the day before, been conveyed, he knew not whither, in a hackney-coach, attended by his uncle and an ill-looking fellow, who had much the appearance of a bailiff or turnkey; so that he feared she was in trouble.

Sir Launcelot was deeply affected by this intimation: his apprehension was even roused by a suspicion, that a man of Darnel's violent temper and unprincipled heart might have practised upon the life of his lovely niece; but, upon recollection, he could not suppose that he had

recourse to such infamous expedients, knowing, as he did, that an account of her would be demanded at his hands, and that it would be easily proved he had conveyed her from the lodging in which she resided. His first fears now gave way to another suggestion, that Antony, in order to intimidate her into a compliance with his proposals, had trumped up a spurious claim against her, and, by virtue of a writ, confined her in some prison or sponging-house. Possessed with this idea, he desired Mr. Clarke to search the sheriff's office in the morning; that he might know whether any such writ had been granted; and he himself resolved to make a tour of the great prisons belonging to the metropolis, to inquire, if perchance, she might not be confined under a borrowed name. Finally, he determined, if possible, to apprise her of his place of abode, by a paragraph in all the daily papers, signifying, sir Launcelot Greaves had arrived at his house near Golden-square.

All these resolutions were punctually executed. No such writ had been taken out in the sheriff's office; and therefore our hero set out on his jail expedition, accompanied by Mr. Clarke, who had contracted some acquaintance with the commanding officers in these garrisons, in the course of his clerkship and practice as an attorney. The first day they spent in prosecuting their inquiry through the Gate-house, Fleet, and Marshalsea; the next they allotted to the King's Bench, where they understood there was a great variety of prisoners. There they proposed to make a minute scrutiny, by the help of Mr. Norton, the deputy-marshal, who was Mr. Clarke's intimate friend, and had nothing at all of the jailer either in his appearance or in his disposition, which was remarkably humane and benevolent towards all his fellow-creatures.

The knight, having bespoken dinner at a tavern in the Borough, was, together with captain Crowe, conducted to the prison of the King's Bench, which is situated in St. George's-fields, about a mile from the end of Westminster-bridge, and appears like a neat little regular town, consisting of one street, surrounded by a very high

wall, including an open piece of ground, which may be termed a garden, where the prisoners take the air, and amuse themselves with a variety of diversions. Except the entrance, where the turnkeys keep watch and ward, there is nothing in the place that looks like a jail, or bears the least colour of restraint. The street is crowded with passengers: tradesmen of all kinds here exercise their different professions: hawkers of all sorts are admitted to call and vend their wares, as in any open street of London. Here are butchers' stands, chandlers' shops, a surgery, a tap-house well frequented, and a public kitchen, in which provisions are dressed for all the prisoners gratis, at the expense of the publican: here the voice of misery never complains; and, indeed, little else is to be heard but the sounds of mirth and jollity. At the farther end of the street, on the right hand, is a little paved court, leading to a separate building, consisting of twelve large apartments, called state-rooms, well-furnished, and fitted up for the reception of the better sort of crown prisoners; and, on the other side of the street, facing a separate division of ground, called the common side, is a range of rooms, occupied by prisoners of the lowest order, who share the profits of a begging-box, and are maintained by this practice, and some established funds of charity. We ought also to observe, that the jail is provided with a neat chapel, in which a clergyman, in consideration of a certain salary, performs divine service every Sunday.

Our adventurer, having searched the books, and perused the description of all the female prisoners who had been for some weeks admitted into the jail, obtained not the least intelligence of his concealed charmer; but, resolving to alleviate his disappointment by the gratification of his curiosity, under the auspices of Mr. Norton, he made a tour of the prison; and, in particular, visited the kitchen, where he saw a number of spits loaded with a variety of provision, consisting of butchers-meat, poultry, and game. He could not help expressing his astonishment with uplifted hands, and congratulating himself in secret, upon his being a member of that community

which had provided such a comfortable asylum for the unfortunate. His ejaculation was interrupted by a tumultuous noise in the street; and Mr. Norton, declaring he was sent for to the lodge, consigned our hero to the care of one Mr. Felton, a prisoner of a very decent appearance, who paid his compliments with a very good grace, and invited the company to repose themselves in his apartment, which was large, commodious, and well furnished. When sir Launcelot asked the cause of that uproar, he told him that it was a prelude to a boxing-match between two of the prisoners, to be decided in the ground or garden of the place.

Captain Crowe expressing an eager curiosity to see the battle, Mr. Felton assured him there would be no sport, as the combatants were both reckoned dunghills. 'But, in half an hour,' said he, 'there will be a battle of some consequence between two of the demagogues of the place, Dr. Crabclaw, and Mr. Tapley; the first a physician, and the other a brewer. You must know, gentlemen, that this microcosm, or republic in miniature, is, like the great world, split into factions. Crabclaw is the leader of one party, and the other is headed by Tapley: both are men of warm and impetuous tempers; and their intrigues have embroiled the whole place, insomuch, that it was dangerous to walk the street, on account of the continual skirmishes of their partizans. At length, some of the more sedate inhabitants, having met, and deliberated upon some remedy for these growing disorders, proposed, that the dispute should be at once decided by single combat between the two chiefs, who readily agreed to the proposal. The match was accordingly made for five guineas, and this very day and hour appointed for the trial, on which considerable sums of money are depending. As for Mr. Norton, it is not proper that he should be present, or seem to countenance such violent proceedings; which, however, it is necessary to connive at, as convenient vents for the evaporation of those humours, which, being confined, might accumulate and break out with greater fury, in conspiracy and rebellion.'

The knight owned he could not conceive by what

means such a number of licentious people, amounting, with their dependents, to above five hundred, were restrained within the bounds of any tolerable discipline, or prevented from making their escape, which they might at any time accomplish, either by stealth or open violence; as it could not be supposed that one or two turn-keys, continually employed in opening and shutting the door, could resist the efforts of a whole multitude. 'Your wonder, good sir,' said Mr. Felton, 'will vanish, when you consider, it is hardly possible that the multitude should co-operate in the execution of such a scheme; and that the keeper perfectly well understands the maxim *divide et impera*. Many prisoners are restrained by the dictates of gratitude towards the deputy-marshal, whose friendship and good offices they have experienced: some, no doubt, are actuated by motives of discretion. One party is an effectual check upon the other; and I am firmly persuaded, that there are not ten prisoners within the place that would make their escape if the doors were laid open. This is a step which no man would take, unless his fortune was altogether desperate; because it would oblige him to leave his country for life, and expose him to the most imminent risk of being retaken, and treated with the utmost severity. The majority of the prisoners live in the most lively hope of being released by the assistance of their friends, the compassion of their creditors, or the favour of the legislature. Some, who are cut off from all these prospects, are become naturalized to the place, knowing they cannot subsist in any other situation: I myself am one of these. After having resigned all my effects for the benefit of my creditors, I have been detained these nine years in prison, because one person refuses to sign my certificate. I have long outlived all my friends, from whom I could expect the least countenance or favour; I am grown old in confinement; and lay my account with ending my days in jail, as the mercy of the legislature, in favour of insolvent debtors, is never extended to uncertified bankrupts taken in execution. By dint of industry, and the most rigid economy, I make shift to live independent in this

retreat. To this scene, my faculty of subsisting, as well as my body, is peculiarly confined. Had I an opportunity to escape, where should I go? All my views of fortune have been long blasted: I have no friends nor connexions in the world: I must, therefore, starve in some sequestered corner, or be recaptured and confined for ever to close prison, deprived of the indulgences which I now enjoy.'

Here the conversation was broken off by another uproar, which was the signal to battle between the doctor and his antagonist. The company immediately adjourned to the field, where the combatants were already undressed, and the stakes deposited. The doctor seemed of the middle age and middle stature, active and alert, with an atrabilarious aspect, and a mixture of rage and disdain expressed in his countenance. The brewer was large, raw-boned, and round as a butt of beer; but very fat, unwieldy, short-winded, and phlegmatic. Our adventurer was not a little surprised, when he beheld, in the character of seconds, a male and a female, stripped naked from the waist upwards, the latter ranging on the side of the physician; but the commencement of the battle prevented his demanding of his guide an explanation of this phenomenon. The doctor, retiring some paces backwards, threw himself into the attitude of a battering-ram, and rushed upon his antagonist with great impetuosity, foreseeing, that should he have the good fortune to overturn him in the first assault, it would not be an easy task to raise him up again, and put him in a capacity of offence. But the momentum of Crabclaw's head, and the concomitant efforts of his knuckles, had no effect upon the ribs of Tapley, who stood firm as the Acroceraunian promontory; and, stepping forward with his projected fist, something smaller and softer than a sledge-hammer, struck the physician to the ground. In a trice, however, by the assistance of his female second, he was on his legs again, and, grappling with his antagonist, endeavoured to tip him a fall; but, instead of accomplishing his purpose, he received a cross-buttock; and the brewer, throwing himself upon him as he fell, had well nigh smothered

him on the spot. The Amazon flew to his assistance; and Tapley showing no inclination to get up, she smote him on the temple, till he roared. The male second, hastening to the relief of his principal, made application to the eyes of the female, which were immediately surrounded with black circles; and she returned the salute with a blow which brought a double stream of blood from his nostrils, greeting him at the same time with the opprobrious appellation of a lousy son of a b—h. A combat more furious than the first would now have ensued, had not Felton interposed with an air of authority, and insisted on the man's leaving the field; an injunction, which he forthwith obeyed, saying, 'Well, damme, Felton, you're my friend and commander: I'll obey your order; but the b—h will be foul of me before we sleep.' Then Felton, advancing to his opponent, 'Madam,' said he, 'I'm very sorry to see a lady of your rank and qualifications expose yourself in this manner: for God's sake, behave with a little more decorum, if not for the sake of your own family, at least for the credit of your sex in general.'—'Heark ye, Felton,' said she, 'decorum is founded upon a delicacy of sentiment and deportment, which cannot consist with the disgraces of a jail, and the miseries of indigence. But I see the dispute is now terminated, and the money is to be drunk: if you'll dine with us, you shall be welcome; if not, you may die in your sobriety, and be d—d.'

By this time the doctor had given out, and allowed the brewer to be the better man; yet he would not honour the festival with his presence, but retired to his chamber, exceedingly mortified at his defeat. Our hero was reconducted to Mr. Felton's apartment, where he sat some time without opening his mouth, so astonished he was at what he had seen and heard. 'I perceive, sir,' said the prisoner, 'you are surprised at the manner in which I accosted that unhappy woman; and perhaps you will be more surprised, when you hear, that, within these eighteen months, she was actually a person of fashion, and her opponent (who, by the bye, is her husband) universally respected, as a man of honour and a brave officer.'—'I

am, indeed,' cried our hero, 'overwhelmed with amazement and concern, as well as stimulated by an eager curiosity, to know the fatal causes which have produced such a deplorable reverse of character and fortune: but I will rein my curiosity till the afternoon, if you will favour me with your company at a tavern in the neighbourhood, where I have bespoken dinner; a favour, which I hope Mr. Norton will have no objection to your granting, as he himself is to be of the party.' The prisoner thanked him for his kind invitation, and they adjourned immediately to the place, taking up the deputy-marshal in their passage through the lodge or entrance of the prison.

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CHAP. XXI.—Containing farther anecdotes relating to the children of wretchedness.

Dinner being cheerfully discussed, and our adventurer expressing an eager desire to know the history of the male and female who had acted as squires or seconds to the champions of the King's Bench, Felton gratified his curiosity to this effect:

'All that I know of captain Clewlin, previous to his commitment, is, that he was commander of a sloop of war, and bore the reputation of a gallant officer; that he married the daughter of a rich merchant in the city of London, against the inclination, and without the knowledge of her father, who renounced her for this act of disobedience; that the captain consoled himself for the rigour of the parent, with the possession of the lady, who was not only remarkably beautiful in person, but highly accomplished in her mind, and amiable in her disposition. Such, a few months ago, were those two persons, whom you saw acting in such a vulgar capacity. When they first entered the prison, they were undoubtedly the handsomest couple mine eyes ever beheld, and their appearance won universal respect even from the most brutal inhabitants of the jail. The captain, having unwarily involved himself as security for a man, to whom he had



lain under obligations, became liable for a considerable sum; and his own father-in-law, being the sole creditor of the bankrupt, took this opportunity of wreaking vengeance upon him, for having espoused his daughter. He watched an opportunity, until the captain had actually stepped into the post-chaise with his lady, for Portsmouth, where his ship lay, and caused him to be arrested in the most public and shameful manner. Mrs. Clewlin had like to have sunk under the first transports of her grief and mortification; but these subsiding, she had recourse to personal solicitation. She went, with her only child in her arms, (a lovely boy) to her father's door; and, being denied admittance, kneeled down in the street, imploring his compassion in the most pathetic strain: but this hard-hearted citizen, instead of recognising his child, and taking the poor mourner to his bosom, insulted her from the window with the most bitter reproach, saying, among other shocking expressions, Strumpet, take yourself away with your brat; otherwise I shall send for the beadle, and have you to Bridewell.

'The unfortunate lady was cut to the heart by this usage, and fainted in the street; from whence she was conveyed to a public house, by the charity of some passengers. She afterwards attempted to soften the barbarity of her father, by repeated letters, and by interesting some of his friends to intercede with him in her behalf; but all her endeavours proving ineffectual, she accompanied her husband to the prison of the King's Bench, where she must have felt, in the severest manner, the fatal reverse of circumstances to which she was exposed. The captain, being disabled from going to sea, was superseded; and he saw all his hopes blasted, in the midst of an active war, at a time when he had the fairest prospects of fame and fortune. He saw himself reduced to extreme poverty; cooped up with the tender partner of his heart, in a wretched hovel, amidst the refuse of mankind, and on the brink of wanting the common necessities of life. The mind of man is ever ingenious in finding resources. He comforted his lady with vain hopes of having friends who would effect his deliverance; and repeated assurances of

this kind so long, that he at length began to think they were not altogether void of foundation.

‘Mrs. Clewlin, from a principle of duty, collected all her fortitude, that she might not only bear her fate with patience, but even contribute to alleviate the woes of her husband, whom her affection had ruined. She affected to believe the suggestions of his pretended hope; she interchanged with him assurances of better fortune; her appearance exhibited a calm, while her heart was torn with anguish.

‘She assisted him in writing letters to former friends, the last consolation of the wretched prisoner; she delivered these letters with her own hand, and underwent a thousand mortifying repulses, the most shocking circumstances of which she concealed from her husband; she performed all the menial offices in her own little family, which was maintained by pawning her apparel; and both the husband and wife, in some measure, sweetened their cares, by prattling and toying with their charming little boy, on whom they doted with an enthusiasm of fondness. Yet, even this pleasure was mingled with the most tender and melancholy regret. I have seen the mother hang over him, with the most affecting expression of this kind in her aspect, the tears contending with the smiles upon her countenance, while she exclaimed, Alas! my poor prisoner, little did your mother once think she should be obliged to nurse you in a jail! The captain’s paternal love was dashed with impatience: he would snatch up the boy in a transport of grief, press him to his breast, devour him as it were with kisses, throw up his eyes to heaven in the most emphatic silence; then convey the child hastily to his mother’s arms, pull his hat over his eyes, stalk out into the common walk, and, finding himself alone, break out into tears and lamentation.

‘Ah! little did this unhappy couple know what farther griefs awaited them! The small-pox broke out in the prison, and poor Tommy Clewlin was infected. As the eruption proved unfavourable, you may conceive the consternation with which they were overwhelmed. Their distress was rendered inconceivable by indigence; for, by

this time, they were so destitute, that they could neither pay for common attendance, nor procure proper advice. I did, on that occasion, what I thought my duty towards my fellow-creatures : I wrote to a physician of my acquaintance, who was humane enough to visit the poor little patient : I engaged a careful woman prisoner as a nurse ; and Mr. Norton supplied them with money and necessaries. These helps were barely sufficient to preserve them from the horrors of despair, when they saw their little darling panting under the rage of a loathsome, pestilential malady, during the excessive heat of the dog-days, and struggling for breath in the noxious atmosphere of a confined cabin, where they scarce had room to turn on the most necessary occasions. The eager curiosity with which the mother eyed the doctor's looks, as often as he visited the boy ; the terror and trepidation of the father, while he desired to know his opinion ; in a word, the whole tenor of their distress, baffled all description.

'At length, the physician, for the sake of his own character, was obliged to be explicit ; and, returning with the captain to the common walk, told him, in my hearing, that the child could not possibly recover. This sentence seemed to have petrified the unfortunate parent, who stood motionless, and seemingly bereft of sense. I led him to my apartment, where he sat a full hour in that state of stupefaction ; then he began to groan hideously : a shower of tears burst from his eyes ; he threw himself on the floor, and uttered the most piteous lamentation that ever was heard. Meanwhile, Mrs. Norton, being made acquainted with the doctor's prognostic, visited Mrs. Clewlin, and invited her to the lodge. Her prophetic fears immediately took the alarm. What ! cried she, starting up with a frantic wildness in her looks : then our case is desperate ; I shall lose my dear Tommy : the poor prisoner will be released by the hand of Heaven. Death will convey him to the cold grave. The dying innocent, hearing this exclamation, pronounced these words : Tommy won't leave you, my dear mamma ; if death comes to take Tommy, papa shall drive him away

with his sword. This address deprived the wretched mother of all resignation to the will of Providence : she tore her hair, dashed herself on the pavement, shrieked aloud, and was carried off in a deplorable state of distraction.

‘That same evening the lovely babe expired, and the father grew frantic : he made an attempt on his own life ; and, being with difficulty restrained, his agitation sunk into a kind of sullen insensibility, which seemed to absorb all sentiment, and gradually vulgarised his faculty of thinking. In order to dissipate the violence of his sorrow, he continually shifted the scene from one company to another, contracted abundance of low connexions, and drowned his cares in repeated intoxication. The unhappy lady underwent a long series of hysterical fits, and other complaints, which seemed to have a fatal effect on her brain as well as constitution. Cordials were administered to keep up her spirits ; and she found it necessary to protract the use of them, to blunt the edge of grief, by overwhelming reflection, and remove the sense of uneasiness arising from a disorder in her stomach. In a word, she became an habitual dram-drinker ; and this practice exposed her to such communication, as debauched her reason, and perverted her sense of decorum and propriety. She and her husband gave a loose to vulgar excess, in which they were enabled to indulge by the charity and interest of some friends, who obtained half-pay for the captain. They are now metamorphosed into the shocking creatures you have seen ; he into a riotous plebeian, and she into a ragged trull : they are both drunk every day, quarrel and fight one with another, and often insult their fellow-prisoners. Yet, they are not wholly abandoned by virtue and humanity. The captain is scrupulously honest in all his dealings, and pays off his debts punctually every quarter, as soon as he receives his half-pay. Every prisoner in distress is welcome to share his money while it lasts ; and his wife never fails, while it is in her power, to relieve the wretched ; so that their generosity, even in this miserable disguise, is universally respected by their neighbours. Some-

times the recollection of their former rank comes over them like a qualm, which they dispel with brandy, and then humorously rally one another on their mutual degeneracy. She often stops me in the walk, and, pointing to the captain, says, My husband, though he's become a blackguard jail-bird, must be allowed to be a handsome fellow still. On the other hand, he will frequently desire me to take notice of his rib, as she chances to pass. Mind that draggle-tail'd, drunken drab, he will say: what an antidote it is! yet, for all that, Felton, she was a fine woman when I married her. Poor Bess! I have been the ruin of her, that is certain; and deserve to be d—d for bringing her to this pass.

'Thus they accommodate themselves to each other's infirmities, and pass their time not without some taste of plebeian enjoyment: but, name their child, they never fail to burst into tears, and still feel a return of the most poignant sorrow.'

Sir Launcelot Greaves did not hear this story unmoved. Tom Clarke's cheeks were bedewed with the drops of sympathy, while, with much sobbing, he declared his opinion, that an action would lie against the lady's father. Captain Crowe, having listened to the story with uncommon attention, expressed his concern that an honest seaman should be so taken in the stays; but he imputed all his calamities to the wife: 'for why?' said he: 'a seafaring man may have a sweetheart in every port; but he should steer clear of a wife, as he would avoid a quicksand. You see, brother, how this here Clewlin lags astern in the wake of a snivelling b——; otherwise he'd never make a weft in his ensign for the loss of a child. Odds heart! he could have done no more if he had sprung a top-mast, or started a timber.'

The knight declaring that he would take another view of the prison in the afternoon, Mr. Felton insisted upon his doing him the honour to drink a dish of tea in his apartment, and sir Launcelot accepted his invitation. Thither they accordingly repaired, after having made another circuit of the jail; and the tea-things were produced by Mrs. Felton, when she was summoned to the door, and, in

a few minutes returning, communicated something in a whisper to her husband. He changed colour, and repaired to the staircase, where he was heard to talk aloud in an angry tone. When he came back, he told the company he had been teased by a very importunate beggar. Addressing himself to our adventurer, 'You took notice,' says he, 'of a fine lady flaunting about our walk in all the frippery of the fashion : she was lately a fine young widow, that made a great figure at the court end of the town ; she distinguished herself by her splendid equipage, her rich liveries, her brilliant assemblies, her numerous routs, and her elegant taste in dress and furniture. She is nearly related to some of the best families in England, and, it must be owned, mistress of many fine accomplishments ; but, being deficient in true delicacy, she endeavoured to hide that defect by affectation. She pretended to a thousand antipathies which did not belong to her nature. A breast of veal threw her into mortal agonies : if she saw a spider, she screamed ; and at sight of a mouse, she fainted away : she could not without horror behold an entire joint of meat ; and nothing but fricasees and other made dishes were seen upon the table. She caused all her floors to be lined with green baize, that she might trip along them with more ease and pleasure. Her footmen wore clogs, which were deposited in the hall ; and both they and her chairmen were laid under the strongest injunctions to avoid porter and tobacco. Her jointure amounted to eight hundred pounds per annum, and she made shift to spend four times that sum : at length it was mortgaged for nearly the entire value ; but, far from retrenching, she seemed to increase in extravagance, until her effects were taken in execution, and her person here deposited in safe custody. When one considers the abrupt transition she underwent, from her spacious apartments to a hovel scarce eight feet square ; from sumptuous furniture to bare benches ; from magnificence to meanness ; from affluence to extreme poverty ; one would imagine she must have been totally overwhelmed by such a sudden gush of misery. But this was not the case : she has, in fact, no delicate feelings. She forthwith

accommodated herself to the exigency of her fortune; yet she still affects to keep state amidst the miseries of a jail; and this affectation is truly ridiculous. She lies a-bed till two o'clock in the afternoon: she maintains a female attendant for the sole purpose of dressing her person: her cabin is the least cleanly in the whole prison: she has learned to eat bread and cheese, and drink porter; but she always appears once a day dressed in the pink of the fashion. She has found means to run in debt at the chandler's shop, the baker's, and the tap-house, though there is nothing got in this place but with ready money: she has even borrowed small sums from divers prisoners, who were themselves on the brink of starving. She takes pleasure in being surrounded with duns, observing, that by such people a person of fashion is to be distinguished. She writes circular letters to her former friends and acquaintance, and by this method has raised pretty considerable contributions; for she writes in a most elegant and irresistible style. About a fortnight ago, she received a supply of twenty guineas; when, instead of paying her little jail debts, or withdrawing any part of her apparel from pawn, she laid out the whole sum in a fashionable suit and laces; and next day borrowed of me a shilling to purchase a neck of mutton for her dinner. She seems to think her rank of life entitles her to this kind of assistance. She talks very pompously of her family and connexions, by whom, however, she has been long renounced. She has no sympathy nor compassion for the distresses of her fellow-creatures; but she is perfectly well-bred; she bears a repulse the best of any woman I ever knew; and her temper has never been once ruffled since her arrival in the King's Bench. She now entreated me to lend her half a guinea, for which she said she had the most pressing occasion, and promised upon her honour it should be repaid to-morrow; but I lent a deaf ear to her request, and told her, in plain terms, that her honour was already bankrupt.'

Sir Launcelot, thrusting his hand mechanically into his pocket, pulled out a couple of guineas, and desired Felton to accommodate her with that trifle in his own name;

but he declined the proposal, and refused to touch the money. 'God forbid,' said he, 'that I should attempt to thwart your charitable intention; but this, my good sir, is no object; she has many resources. Neither should we number the clamorous beggar among those who really feel distress. He is generally gorged with bounty misapplied. The liberal hand of charity should be extended to modest want that pines in silence, encountering cold, and nakedness, and hunger, and every species of distress. Here you may see the wretch of keen sensations, blasted by accident in the blossom of his fortune, shivering in the solitary recess of indigence, disdaining to beg, and even ashamed to let his misery be known: here you may see the parent, who has known happier times, surrounded by his tender offspring, naked and forlorn, demanding food, which his circumstances cannot afford. That man, of decent appearance and melancholy aspect, who lifted his hat as you passed him in the yard, is a person of unblemished character: he was a reputable tradesman in the city, and failed through inevitable losses. A commission of bankruptcy was taken out against him, by his sole creditor, a quaker, who refused to sign his certificate. He has lived these three years in prison, with a wife and five small children. In a little time after his commitment, he had friends who offered to pay ten shillings in the pound of what he owed, and to give security for paying the remainder in three years, by instalments. The honest quaker did not charge the bankrupt with any dishonest practices; but he rejected the proposal with the most mortifying indifference, declaring that he did not want his money. The mother repaired to his house, and kneeled before him with her five lovely children, imploring mercy with tears and exclamations. He stood this scene unmoved, and even seemed to enjoy the prospect; wearing the looks of complacency, while his heart was steeled with rancour. Woman, said he, these be hopeful babes, if they were duly nurtured. Go thy ways in peace; I have taken my resolution. Her friends maintained the family for some



time ; but it is not in human charity to persevere : some of them died ; some of them grew unfortunate ; some of them fell off ; and now the poor man is reduced to the extremity of indigence, from whence he has no prospect of being retrieved. The fourth part of what you would have bestowed upon the lady, would make this poor man and his family sing for joy.'

He had scarce pronounced these words, when our hero desired the man might be called, and in a few minutes he entered the apartment with a low obeisance. ' Mr. Coleby,' said the knight, ' I have heard how cruelly you have been used by your creditor, and beg you will accept this trifling present, if it can be of any service to you in your distress.' So saying, he put five guineas into his hand. The poor man was so confounded at such an unlooked-for acquisition, that he stood motionless and silent, unable to thank the donor ; and Mr. Felton conveyed him to the door, observing that his heart was too full for utterance : but in a little time, his wife, bursting into the room with her five children, looked around, and going up to sir Launcelot, without any direction, exclaimed, ' This is the angel sent by Providence to succour me and my poor innocents.' Then falling at his feet, she pressed his hand, and bathed it with her tears. He raised her up with that complacency which was natural to his disposition : he kissed all her children, who were remarkably handsome and neatly kept, though in homely apparel : and giving her his direction, assured her she might always apply to him in her distress.

After her departure, he produced a bank-note for twenty pounds, and would have deposited it in the hands of Mr. Felton, to be distributed in charities among the objects of the place ; but he desired it might be left with Mr. Norton, who was the proper person for managing his benevolence ; and he promised to assist the deputy with his advice in laying it out.

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CHAP. XXII.—In which captain Crowe is sublimed into the regions of astrology.

Three whole days had our adventurer prosecuted his inquiry about the amiable Aurelia, whom he sought in every place of public and private entertainment or resort, without obtaining the least satisfactory intelligence, when he received, one evening, from the hands of a porter, who instantly vanished, the following billet: ‘If you would learn the particulars of Miss Darnel’s fate, fail not to be in the fields by the Foundling Hospital, precisely at seven o’clock this evening, when you shall be met by a person who will give you the satisfaction you desire, together with his reason for addressing you in this mysterious manner.’ Had this intimation concerned any other subject, perhaps the knight would have deliberated with himself in what manner he should take a hint so darkly communicated; but his eagerness to retrieve the jewel he had lost divested him of all his caution: the time of assignation was already at hand; and neither the captain nor his nephew could be found to accompany him, had he been disposed to make use of their attendance. He therefore, after a moment’s hesitation, repaired to the place appointed, in the utmost agitation and anxiety, lest the hour should be elapsed before his arrival.

Crowe was one of those defective spirits, who cannot subsist for any length of time on their own bottoms. He wanted a familiar prop, upon which he could disburden his cares, his doubts, and his humours; a humble friend, who would endure his caprices, and with whom he could communicate, free of all reserve and restraint. Though he loved his nephew’s person, and admired his parts, he considered him often as a little petulant jackanapes, who presumed upon his superior understanding; and as for sir Launcelot, there was something in his character that overawed the seaman, and kept him at a disagreeable distance. He had, in this dilemma, cast his eyes upon Timothy Crabshaw, and admitted him to a considerable share of familiarity and fellowship. These companions

had been employed in smoking a social pipe at an ale-house in the neighbourhood, when the knight made his excursion; and, returning to the house about supper-time, found Mr. Clarke in waiting. The young lawyer was alarmed when he heard the hour of ten, without seeing our adventurer, who had been used to be extremely regular in his economy; and the captain and he supped in profound silence. Finding, upon inquiry among the servants, that the knight went out abruptly, in consequence of having received a billet, Tom began to be visited with the apprehension of a duel, and sat the best part of the night by his uncle, sweating with the expectation of seeing our hero brought home a breathless corse: but no tidings of him arriving, he, about two in the morning, repaired to his own lodging, resolved to publish a description of sir Launcelot in the newspapers, if he should not appear next day. Crowe did not pass the time without uneasiness. He was extremely concerned at the thought of some mischief having befallen his friend and patron; and he was terrified with the apprehension, that, in case sir Launcelot was murdered, his spirit might come and give notice of his fate. Now, he had an insuperable aversion to all correspondence with the dead; and, taking it for granted that the spirit of his departed friend could not appear to him except when he should be alone, and a-bed in the dark, he determined to pass the remainder of the night without going to bed. For this purpose, his first care was to visit the garret in which Timothy Crabshaw lay fast asleep, snoring with his mouth wide open. Him the captain with difficulty roused, by dint of promising to regale him with a bowl of rum-punch in the kitchen, where the fire, which had been extinguished, was soon rekindled. The ingredients were fetched from a public-house in the neighbourhood; for the captain was too proud to use his interest in the knight's family, especially at those hours when all the rest of the servants were retired to their repose; and he and Timothy drank together until day-break, the conversation turning upon hobgoblins, and God's revenge against murder. The cook-maid lay in a little apartment contiguous to the

kitchen ; and whether disturbed by those horrible tales of apparitions, or titillated by the savoury steams that issued from the punch-bowl, she made a virtue of necessity or appetite, and, dressing herself in the dark, suddenly appeared before them, to the no small perturbation of both. Timothy, in particular, was so startled, that in his endeavours to make a hasty retreat towards the chimney corner, he overturned the table ; the liquor was spilt, but the bowl was saved by falling on a heap of ashes. Mrs. Cook, having reprimanded him for his foolish fear, declared she had got up betimes in order to scour her saucepans ; and the captain proposed to have the bowl replenished, if materials could be procured. This difficulty was overcome by Crabshaw ; and they sat down with their new associate to discuss the second edition. The knight's sudden disappearing being again brought upon the carpet, their female companion gave it as her opinion, that nothing would be so likely to bring this affair to light, as going to a cunning man, whom she had lately consulted about a silver spoon that was mislaid, and who told her all things that she ever did, and ever would happen to her through the whole course of her life.

Her two companions pricked up their ears at this intelligence ; and Crowe asked, if the spoon had been found. She answered in the affirmative ; and said, the cunning man described to a hair the person that should be her true love, and her wedded husband : that he was a seafaring man ; that he was pretty well stricken in years ; a little passionate or so ; and that he went with his fingers clinched like, as it were. The captain began to sweat at this description, and mechanically thrust his hands into his pockets ; while Crabshaw, pointing to him, told her, he believed she had got the right sow by the ear. Crowe grumbled, that, mayhap, for all that, he should not be brought up by such a grappling neither. Then he asked, if this cunning man dealt with the devil ; declaring, in that case, he would keep clear of him : for why ? because he must have sold himself to Old Scratch ; and being a servant of the devil, how could he be a good

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subject to his majesty? Mrs. Cook assured him, the conjurer was a good Christian, and that he gained all his knowledge by conversing with the stars and planets. Thus satisfied, the two friends resolved to consult him as soon as it should be light; and being directed to the place of his habitation, set out for it by seven in the morning. They found the house forsaken, and had already reached the end of the lane in their return, when they were accosted by an old woman, who gave them to understand, that, if they had occasion for the advice of a fortune-teller, as she did suppose they had, from their stopping at the house where Doctor Grubble lived, she would conduct them to a person of much more eminence in that profession: at the same time she informed them, that the said Grubble had been lately sent to Bridewell; a circumstance, which, with all his art, he had not been able to foresee. The captain, without any scruple, put himself and his companion under convoy of this beldam, who, through many windings and turnings, brought them to the door of a ruinous house, standing in a blind alley; which door having opened with a key drawn from her pocket, she introduced them into a parlour, where they saw no other furniture than a naked bench, and some frightful figures on the bare walls, drawn or rather scrawled with charcoal. Here she left them locked in, until she should give the doctor notice of their arrival; and they amused themselves with deciphering these characters and hieroglyphics. The first figure that engaged their attention, was that of a man hanging upon a gibbet, which both considered as an unfavourable omen, and each endeavoured to avert from his own person. Crabshaw observed, that the figure so suspended was clothed in a sailor's jacket and trowsers; a truth, which the captain could not deny; but, on the other hand, he affirmed, that the said figure exhibited the very nose and chin of Timothy, together with the hump on one shoulder. A warm dispute ensued; and being maintained with much acrimonious altercation, might have dissolved the new-cemented friendship of these two originals, had it not been interrupted by the old sibyl, who, coming into the

parlour, intimated that the doctor waited for them above : she likewise told them, that he never admitted more than one at a time. This hint occasioned a fresh contest : the captain insisted upon Crabshaw's making sail a-head, in order to look out afore ; but Timothy persisted in refusing this honour, declaring, he did not pretend to lead, but he would follow, as in duty bound. The old gentlewoman abridged the ceremony, by leading out Crabshaw with one hand, and locking up Crowe with the other. The former was dragged up stairs like a bear to a stake, not without reluctance and terror, which did not at all abate at sight of the conjurer, with whom he was immediately shut up by his conductress, after she had told him in a whisper, that he must deposit a shilling in a little black coffia, supported by a human skull and thigh-bones crossed, on a stool covered with black baize, that stood in one corner of the apartment. The squire, having made his offering with fear and trembling, ventured to survey the objects around him, which were very well calculated to augment his confusion. He saw divers skeletons hung by the head ; the stuffed skin of a young alligator, a calf with two heads, and several snakes suspended from the ceiling ; with the jaws of a shark, and a starved weasel. On another funeral table he beheld two spheres, between which lay a book open, exhibiting outlandish characters and mathematical diagrams. On one side stood an ink-standish, with paper ; and behind the desk appeared the conjurer himself, in sable vestments, his head so overshadowed with hair, that, far from contemplating his features, Timothy could distinguish nothing but a long white beard, which, for aught he knew, might have belonged to a four-legged goat as well as to a two-legged astrologer.

This apparition, which the squire did not eye without manifest discomposure, extending a white wand, made certain evolutions over the head of Timothy ; and, having muttered an ejaculation, commanded him, in a hollow tone, to come forward, and declare his name. Crabshaw, thus adjured, advanced to the altar ; and, whether from design, or, which is more probable, from confusion, an-

answered 'Samuel Crowe.' The conjurer, taking up the pen, and making a few scratches on the paper, exclaimed, in a terrific accent, 'How! miscreant! attempt to impose upon the stars? you look more like a crab than a crow, and were born under the sign of Cancer.' The squire, almost annihilated by this exclamation, fell upon his knees, crying, 'I pray yaw, my lord conjurer's worship, pardon my ignorance, and down't go to baund me over to the Red Sea like: I'se a poor Yorkshire tyke, and would no more cheat the stars than I'd cheat my own vather, as the saying is: a must be a good hand at trapping, that catches the stars a napping: but, as your honour's worship observed, my name is Tim Crabshaw, of the East Riding, groom and squair to sir Launcelot Greaves, baron knight, and arrant knight, who ran mad for a wench, as your worship's conjuration well knows. The person below is captain Crowe; and we coom, by Margery Cook's recommendation, to seek after my measter, who is gone away, or made away, the Lord he knows how and where.'

Here he was interrupted by the conjurer, who exhorted him to sit down and compose himself, until he should cast a figure: then he scrawled the paper, and waving his wand, repeated abundance of gibberish concerning the number, the names, the houses, and revolutions of the planets, with their conjunctions, oppositions, signs, circles, cycles, trines, and trigons. When he perceived that this artifice had its proper effect in disturbing the brain of Crabshaw, he proceeded to tell him, from the stars, that his name was Crabshaw, or Crabclaw; that he was born in the East Riding of Yorkshire, of poor, yet honest parents, and had some skill in horses; that he served a gentleman, whose name began with the letter G, which gentleman had run mad for love, and left his family; but whether he would return alive or dead, the stars had not yet determined. Poor Timothy was thunderstruck, to find the conjurer acquainted with all these circumstances, and begged to know, if he mought be so bauld to ax a question or two about his own fortune. The astrologer pointing to the little coffin, our squire understood the hint,

and deposited another shilling. The sage had recourse to his book, erected another scheme, performed once more his airy evolutions with the wand, and, having recited another mystical preamble, expounded the book of fate in these words: 'You shall neither die by war nor water, by hunger or by thirst, or be brought to the grave by old age or distemper; but, let me see; ay, the stars will have it so: you shall be—exalted,—Ah!—ay, that is, hanged for horse-stealing.'—'O, good my lord conjurer!' roared the squire, 'I'd as lief give forty shillings as be hanged.'—'Peace, sirrah!' cried the other: 'would you contradict or reverse the immutable decrees of fate? Hanging is your destiny; and hanged you shall be: and, comfort yourself with the reflection, that, as you are not the first, so neither will you be the last, to swing on Ty-bara tree.' This comfortable assurance composed the mind of Timothy, and, in a great measure, reconciled him to the prediction. He now proceeded, in a whining tone, to ask, whether he should suffer for the first fact, whether it would be for a horse or a mase, and of what colour, that he might know when his hour was come. The conjurer gravely answered, that he would steal a dappled gelding on a Wednesday, be cast at the Old Bailey on a Thursday, and suffer on a Friday; and he strenuously recommended it to him, to appear in the cart with a nese-gay in one hand, and the Whole Duty of Man in the other. 'But if in case it should be in winter,' said the squire, 'when a nese-gay can't be had?'—'Why, then,' replied the conjurer, 'an orange will do as well.' These material points being adjusted to the entire satisfaction of Timothy, he declared he would bestow another shilling to know the fortune of an old companion, who truly did not deserve so much at his hands; but he could not help loving him better than e'er a friend he had in the world. So saying, he dropped a third offering in the coffin, and desired to know the fate of his horse Gilbert. The astrologer, having again consulted his art, pronounced, that Gilbert would die of the staggers, and his carcass be given to the hounds; a sentence, which made a much deeper impression upon Crabshaw's mind than did the predic-



tion of his own untimely and disgraceful fate. He shed a plenteous shower of tears, and his grief broke forth in some passionate expressions of tenderness. At length, he told the astrologer, he would go and send up the captain, who wanted to consult him about Margery Cook, because as how she had informed him, that Doctor Grubble had described just such another man as the captain for her true-love; and he had no great stomach for the match, if so be that the stars were not bent upon their coming together. Accordingly, the squire, being dismissed by the conjurer, descended to the parlour with a rueful length of face, which being perceived by the captain, he demanded, 'What cheer, ho?' with some signs of apprehension. Crabshaw making no return to this salute, he asked if the conjurer had taken an observation, and told him any thing. Then the other replied, he had told him more than he desired to know. 'Why, an' that be case,' said the seaman, 'I have no occasion to go aloft this trip, brother.' This evasion would not serve his turn: old Tisiphone was at hand, and led him up growling into the hall of audience, which he did not examine without trepidation. Having been directed to the coffin, where he presented half-a-crown, in hope of rendering the fates propitious, the usual ceremony was performed; and the doctor addressed him in these words: 'Approach, Raven.' The captain, advancing, 'You an't much mistaken, brother,' said he: 'heave your eye into the binnacle, and box your compass; you'll find I'm a Crowe, not a Raven; thof, indeed, they be both fowls of a feather, as the saying is.'—'I know it,' cried the conjurer: 'thou art a northern crow—a sea-crow: not a crow of prey, but a crow to be preyed upon; a crow to be plucked, to be flayed, to be basted, to be broiled by Margery, upon the gridiron of matrimony.' The novice, changing colour at this denunciation, 'I do understand your signals, brother,' said he; 'and if it be set down in the log-book of fate that we must grapple, why, then, 'ware timbers: but, as I know how the land lies, d'ye see, and the current of my inclination sets me off, I shall haul up close to the wind, and mayhap we shall clear Cape Margery:

but, howsoever, we shall leave that reef in the foretop-sail. I was bound upon another voyage, d'ye see; to look, and to see, and to know, if so be as how I could pick up any intelligence along-shore concerning my friend sir Launcelot, who slipped his cable last night, and has lost company, d'ye see.'—'What!' exclaimed the cunning man, 'art thou a crow, and canst not smell carrion? If thou wouldst grieve for Greaves, behold his naked carcass lies unburied, to feed the kites, the gulls, the rooks, and ravens.'—'What, broached to?'—'Dead as a boiled lobster.'—'Odd's heart! friend, these are the heaviest tidings I have heard these seven long years: there must have been deadly odds when he lowered his topsails. Smite my eyes! I had rather the Mufti had foundered at sea with myself and all my generation on board. Well fare thy soul, flower of the world! had honest Sam Crowe been within hail—but what signifies palavering?' Here the tears of unaffected sorrow flowed plentifully down the furrows of the seaman's cheeks; then his grief giving way to his indignation, 'Heark ye, brother conjurer,' said he: 'you, that can spy foul weather before it comes;—why didn't you give us warning of this hard squall? I'll make you give an account of this here d—d, horrid, confounded murder, d'ye see: mayhap you yourself was concerned, d'ye see.' The conjurer was by no means pleased either with the matter or the manner of the address: he therefore began to soothe the captain's choler, by representing, that he did not pretend to omniscience, which was the attribute of God alone; that human art was fallible and imperfect; and all that it could perform was, to discover certain partial circumstances of any particular object to which its inquiries were directed; that, being questioned by the other man, concerning the cause of his master's disappearing, he had exercised his skill upon the subject, and found reason to believe that sir Launcelot was assassinated; that he should think himself happy in being the instrument of bringing the murderers to justice, though he foresaw they would, of themselves, save him that trouble; for they

would quarrel about dividing the spoil; and one would give information against the other.


The prospect of this satisfaction appeased the resentment, and, in some measure, mitigated the grief of captain Crowe, who took his leave without much ceremony; and, being joined by Crabshaw, proceeded, with a heavy heart, to the house of sir Launcelot, where they found the domestics at breakfast, without exhibiting the least symptom of concern for their absent master. Crowe had been wise enough to conceal from Crabshaw what he had learned of the knight's fate. This fatal intelligence he reserved for the ear of his nephew Mr. Clarke, who did not fail to attend him in the forenoon.

As for the squire, he did nothing but ruminate, in rueful silence, upon the dappled gelding, the nosegay, and the predicted fate of Gilbert. Him he forthwith visited in the stable, and saluted with the kiss of peace: then he bemoaned his fortune with tears, and, by the sound of his own lamentation, was lulled asleep among the litter.

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CHAP. XXIII.—In which the cloud that covers the catastrophe begins to disperse.

We must now leave captain Crowe, and his nephew Mr. Clarke, arguing, with great vehemence, about the fatal intelligence obtained from the conjurer, and penetrate, at once, the veil that concealed our hero. Know, then, reader, that sir Launcelot Greaves, repairing to the place described in the billet which he had received, was accosted by a person muffled in a cloak, who amused him with a feigned story of Aurelia; to which, while he listened with great attention, he found himself suddenly surrounded by armed men, who seized and pinioned down his arms, took away his sword, and conveyed him, by force, into a hackney coach provided for the purpose. In vain he expostulated on this violence with three persons who accompanied him in the vehicle. He could



not extort one word by way of reply; and, from their gloomy aspects, he began to be apprehensive of assassination. Had the carriage passed through any frequented place, he would have endeavoured to alarm the inhabitants; but it was already clear of the town, and his conductors took care to avoid all villages and inhabited houses.

After having travelled about two miles, the coach stopped at a large iron gate, which, being opened, our adventurer was led, in silence, through a spacious house, into a tolerably decent apartment, which, he understood, was intended for his bed-chamber. In a few minutes after his arrival, he was visited by a man of no very prepossessing appearance, who endeavoured to smoothe his countenance, which was naturally stern, and welcomed our adventurer to his house; exhorted him to be of good cheer; assured him he should want for nothing; and desired to know what he would choose for supper.

Sir Launcelot, in answer to this civil address, begged he would explain the nature of his confinement, and the reasons for which his arms were tied like those of the worst malefactor. The other postponed till to-morrow the explanation he demanded; but, in the mean time, unbound his fetters, and, as he declined eating, left him alone to his repose: he took care, however, in retiring, to double-lock the door of the room, whose windows were grated on the outside with iron.

The knight, being thus abandoned to his own meditations, began to ruminate on the present adventure with equal surprise and concern; but the more he revolved circumstances, the more was he perplexed in his conjectures. According to the state of the mind, a very subtle philosopher is often puzzled by a very plain proposition; and this was the case of our adventurer. What made the strongest impression upon his mind, was a notion that he was apprehended on suspicion of treasonable practices, by a warrant from the secretary of state, in consequence of some false, malicious information; and that his prison was no other than the house of a messenger, set apart for the accommodation of suspected persons. In this opinion he

comforted himself, by recollecting his own conscious innocence, and reflecting, that he should be entitled to the privilege of *habeas corpus*, as the act including that inestimable jewel was happily not suspended at this time.

Consoled by this self-assurance, he quietly resigned himself to slumber; but, before he fell asleep, he was very disagreeably undeceived in his conjectures. His ears were all at once saluted with a noise from the next room, conveyed in distant bounces against the wainscot; then a hoarse voice exclaimed, 'Bring up the artillery; let Brutandorf's brigade advance; detach my black husars to ravage the country, let them be new booted, take particular care of the spur-leathers, make a desert of Lusatia, bombard the suburbs of Pera: go, tell my brother Henry to pass the Elbe at Meissen with forty battalions and fifty squadrons. So ho, you major-general Donder, why don't you finish your second parallel? Send hither the engineer Schittenbach. I'll lay all the shoes in my shop the breach will be practicable in four and twenty hours: don't tell me of your works; you and your works may be d—d.'

'Assuredly,' cried another voice from a different quarter, 'he that thinks to be saved by works is in a state of utter reprobation. I myself was a profane weaver, and trusted to the rottenness of works: I kept my journeymen and 'prentices at constant work; and my heart was set upon the riches of this world, which was a wicked work: but now I have got a glimpse of the new light; I feel the operations of grace; I am of a new birth; I abhor good works; I detest all working but the working of the Spirit. Avaunt, Satan! O how I thirst for communication with our sister Jolly!'

'The communication is already open with the Marche,' said the first; 'but as for thee, thou caitiff, who hast presumed to disparage my works, I'll have thee rammed into a mortar with a double charge of powder, and thrown into the enemy's quarters.'

The dialogue operated like a train upon many other inhabitants of the place: one swore he was within three vibrations of finding the longitude, when this noise con-

found his calculation; a second, in broken English, complained he was distorted in the moment of deprosecution; a third, in the character of his holiness, denounced interdiction, excommunication, and anathemas, and swore, by St. Peter's keys, they should howl ten thousand years in purgatory, without the benefit of a single mass; a fourth began to halloo in all the vociferation of a fox-hunter in the chase; and in an instant the whole house was in an uproar. The clamour, however, was of short duration. The different chambers being opened successively, every individual was effectually silenced by the sound of one cabalistical word, which was no other than 'waistcoat;' a charm, which at once cowed the king of P——, dispossessed the fanatic, dumb-founded the mathematician, dismayed the alchemist, deposed the pope, and deprived the squire of all utterance.

Our adventurer was no longer in doubt concerning the place to which he had been conveyed; and the more he reflected on his situation, the more he was overwhelmed with the most perplexing chagrin. He could not conceive by whose means he had been immured in a mad-house; but he heartily repented of his knight-errantry, as a frolic which might have very serious consequences, with respect to his future life and fortune. After mature deliberation, he resolved to demean himself with the utmost circumspection, well knowing that every violent transport would be interpreted into an undeniable symptom of insanity. He was not without hope of being able to move his jailer by a due administration of that which is generally more efficacious than all the flowers of elocution; but when he rose in the morning, he found his pockets had been carefully examined, and emptied of all his papers and cash.

The keeper entering, he inquired about these particulars, and was given to understand that they were all safely deposited for his use, to be forthcoming at a proper season; but, at present, as he should want for nothing, he had no occasion for money. The knight acquiesced in this declaration, and ate his breakfast in quiet. About eleven, he received a visit from the physician, who con-

templated his looks with great solemnity; and, having examined his pulse, shook his head, saying, 'Well, sir, how d'ye do? Come, don't be dejected; every thing is for the best; you are in very good hands, sir, I assure you; and, I dare say, will refuse nothing that may be thought conducive to the recovery of your health.'

'Doctor,' said our hero, 'if it is not an improper question to ask, I should be glad to know your opinion of my disorder.'—'O, sir, as to that,' replied the physician, 'your disorder is a—kind of a—sir, 'tis very common in this country, a sort of a——'—'Do you think my distemper is madness, doctor?'—'O Lord! sir, not absolute madness, no, not madness: you have heard, no doubt, of what is called a weakness of the nerves, sir, though that is a very inaccurate expression; for this phrase, denoting a morbid excess of sensation, seems to imply, that sensation itself is owing to the loose cohesion of those material particles which constitute the nervous substance, inasmuch as the quantity of every effect must be proportionable to its cause: now, you'll please to take notice, sir, if the case were really what these words seem to import, all bodies, whose particles do not cohere with too great a degree of proximity, would be nervous, that is, endued with sensation. Sir, I shall order some cooling things to keep you in due temperature; and you'll do very well. Sir, your humble servant.'

So saying, he retired, and our adventurer could not but think it was very hard, that one man should not dare to ask the most ordinary question, without being reputed mad; while another should talk nonsense by the hour, and yet be esteemed as an oracle. The master of the house, finding sir Launcelot so tame and so tractable, indulged him after dinner with a walk in a little private garden, under the eye of a servant, who followed him at a distance. Here he was saluted by a brother prisoner, a man seemingly turned of thirty, tall and thin, with staring eyes, a hook nose, and a face covered with pimples.

The usual compliments having passed, the stranger, without farther ceremony, asked, if he would oblige him with a chew of tobacco, or could spare him a mouthful

of any sort of cordial ; declaring he had not tasted brandy since he came to the house. The knight assured him it was not in his power to comply with his request ; and began to ask some questions relating to the character of their landlord, which the stranger represented in very unfavourable colours. He described him as a ruffian, capable of undertaking the darkest schemes of villany. He said his house was a repository of the most flagrant iniquities : that it contained fathers kidnapped by their children, wives confined by their husbands, gentlemen of fortune sequestered by their relations, and innocent persons immured by the malice of their adversaries. He affirmed this was his own case ; and asked if our hero had never heard of Dick Distich, the poet and satirist. ‘ Ben Bullock and I,’ said he, ‘ were confident against the world in arms. Did you never see his ode to me, beginning with Fair, blooming youth ? We were sworn brothers ; admired and praised, and quoted each other, sir : we denounced war against all the world, actors, authors, and critics, and, having drawn the sword, threw away the scabbard : we pushed through thick and thin, hacked and hewed, helter skelter, and became as formidable to the writers of the age as the Bæotian band of Thebes. My friend Bullock, indeed, was once rolled in the kennel ; but soon

He vigorous rose, and from the effluvia strong  
Imbibed new life, and scour’d and stank along.

Here is a satire, which I wrote in an alehouse when I was drunk : I can prove it by the evidence of the landlord and his wife : I fancy you’ll own I have some right to say, with my friend Horace,

Qui me commorit, Melius non tangere ! clamo :  
Flebit, et insignis tota cantabitur urbe.’

The knight, having perused the papers, declared his opinion that the verses were tolerably good ; but at the same time observed, that the author had reviled, as ignorant dunces, several persons who had written with reputation, and were generally allowed to have genius ; a cir-



cumstance, that would detract more from his candour, than could be allowed to his capacity.

‘D—n their genius!’ cried the satirist: ‘a pack of impertinent rascals! I tell you, sir, Ben Bullock and I had determined to crush all that were not of our own party: besides, I said before, this piece was written in drink.’—‘Was you drunk too when it was printed and published?’—‘Yes, the printer shall make affidavit, that I was never otherwise than drunk or maudlin, till my enemies, on pretence that my brain was turned, conveyed me to this infernal mansion.’

‘They seem to have been your best friends,’ said the knight; ‘and have put the most tender interpretation on your conduct; for, waving the plea of insanity, your character must stand as that of a man who has some small share of genius, without an atom of integrity. Of all those whom Pope lashed in his *Dunciad*, there was not one who did not richly deserve the imputation of dulness; and every one of them had provoked the satirist by a personal attack. In this respect, the English poet was much more honest than his French pattern Boileau, who stigmatised several men of acknowledged genius, such as Quinault, Perrault, and the celebrated Lulli; for which reason, every man of a liberal turn must, in spite of all his poetical merit, despise him as a rancorous knave. If this disingenuous conduct cannot be forgiven in a writer of his superior genius, who will pardon it in you, whose name is not half emerged from obscurity?’

‘Heark ye, friend,’ replied the bard; ‘keep your pardon and your counsel for those who ask or want it; or, if you will force them upon people, take one piece of advice in return. If you don’t like your present situation, apply for a committee without delay: they’ll find you too much of a fool to have the least tincture of madness; and you’ll be released without farther scruple. In that case, I shall rejoice in your deliverance; you will be freed from confinement, and I shall be happily deprived of your conversation.’

So saying, he flew off at a tangent, and our knight could not help smiling at the peculiar virulence of his disposition. Sir Launcelot then endeavoured to enter into conversation with his attendant, by asking how long Mr. Distich had resided in the house; but he might as well have addressed himself to a Turkish mute: the fellow either pretended ignorance, or refused an answer to every question that was proposed: he would not even disclose the name of his landlord, nor inform him whereabouts the house was situated.

Finding himself agitated with impatience and indignation, he returned to his apartment; and the door being locked upon him, began to review, not without horror, the particulars of his fate. 'How little reason,' said he to himself, 'have we to boast of the blessings enjoyed by the British subject, if he holds them on such a precarious tenure! if a man of rank and property may be thus kidnapped, even in the midst of the capital! if he may be seized by ruffians, insulted, robbed, and conveyed to such a prison as this, from which there seems to be no possibility of escape! Should I be indulged with pen, ink, and paper, and appeal to my relations, or to the magistrates of my country, my letters would be intercepted by those who superintend my confinement: should I try to alarm the neighbourhood, my cries would be neglected, as those of some unhappy lunatic under necessary correction: should I employ the force which Heaven has lent me, I might imbrue my hands in blood, and after all find it impossible to escape, through a number of successive doors, locks, bolts, and sentinels: should I endeavour to tamper with the servant, he might discover my design, and then I should be abridged of the little comfort I enjoy. People may inveigh against the Bastile in France, and the Inquisition in Portugal; but I would ask, if either of these be in reality so dangerous or dreadful as a private madhouse in England, under the direction of a ruffian. The Bastile is a state-prison; the Inquisition is a spiritual tribunal; but both are under the direction of government. It seldom, if ever, happens, that a man entirely innocent is confined in either;

or, if he should, he lays his account with a legal trial before established judges. But, in England, the most innocent person upon earth is liable to be immured for life, under the pretext of lunacy, sequestered from his wife, children, and friends, robbed of his fortune, deprived even of necessaries, and subjected to the most brutal treatment from a low-bred barbarian, who raises an ample fortune on the misery of his fellow-creatures, and may, during his whole life, practise this horrid oppression without question or control.'

This uncomfortable reverie was interrupted by a very unexpected sound, that seemed to issue from the other side of a thick party-wall: it was a strain of vocal music, more plaintive than the widowed turtle's moan, more sweet and ravishing than Philomel's love-warbled song. Through his ear it instantly pierced into his heart; for at once he recognised it to be the voice of his adored Aurelia. Heavens! what was the agitation of his soul, when he made this discovery! how did every nerve quiver! how did his heart throb with the most violent emotion! He ran round the room in distraction, foaming like a lion in the toil: then he placed his ear close to the partition, and listened as if his whole soul was exerted in his sense of hearing. When the sound ceased to vibrate on his ear, he threw himself on the bed; he groaned with anguish; he exclaimed in broken accents; and, in all probability, his heart would have burst, had not the violence of his sorrow found vent in a flood of tears.

These first transports were succeeded by a fit of impatience, which had well nigh deprived him of his senses in good earnest. His surprise at finding his lost Aurelia in such a place; the seeming impossibility of relieving her; and his unspeakable eagerness to contrive some scheme for profiting by the interesting discovery he had made, concurred in brewing up a second ecstasy, during which he acted a thousand extravagances, which it was well for him the attendants did not observe. Perhaps it was well for the servant, that he did not enter while the rhapsody prevailed: had this been the case, he might

have met with the fate of Lichas, whom Hercules in his frenzy destroyed.

Before the cloth was laid for supper, he was calm enough to conceal the disorder of his mind : but he complained of the head-ache, and desired he might be next day visited by the physician, to whom he resolved to explain himself in such a manner, as should make an impression upon him, provided he was not altogether destitute of conscience and humanity.

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CHAP. XXIV.—The knot that puzzles human wisdom, the hand of Fortune sometimes will untie familiar as her garter.

When the doctor made his next appearance in sir Launcelot's apartment, the knight addressed him in these words : ' Sir, the practice of medicine is one of the most honourable professions exercised among the sons of men ; a profession, which has been revered at all periods, and in all nations, and even held sacred in the most polished ages of antiquity : the scope of it is to preserve the being, and confirm the health of our fellow-creatures ; of consequence, to sustain the blessings of society, and crown life with fruition. The character of a physician, therefore, not only supposes natural sagacity, and acquired erudition, but it also implies every delicacy of sentiment, every tenderness of nature, and every virtue of humanity. That these qualities are centred in you, doctor, I would willingly believe ; but it will be sufficient for my purpose, that you are possessed of common integrity. To whose concern I am indebted for your visits, you best know ; but, if you understand the art of medicine, you must be sensible, by this time, that, with respect to me, your prescriptions are altogether unnecessary. Come, sir, you cannot—you don't believe that my intellects are disordered. Yet, granting me to be really under the influence of that deplorable malady, no person has a right to treat me as a lunatic, or to sue out a commission, but my nearest kindred. That you may not plead ignorance of

my name and family, you shall understand that I am sir Launcelot Greaves, of the county of York, baronet; and that my nearest relation is sir Reginald Meadows, of Cheshire, the eldest son of my mother's sister. That gentleman, I am sure, had no concern in seducing me, by false pretences, under the cloud of night, into the fields, where I was surprised, overpowered, and kidnapped by armed ruffians. Had he really believed me insane, he would have proceeded according to the dictates of honour, humanity, and the laws of his country. Situated as I am, I have a right, by making application to the lord chancellor, to be tried by a jury of honest men; but of that right I cannot avail myself, while I remain at the mercy of a brutal miscreant, in whose house I am enclosed, unless you contribute your assistance. Your assistance, therefore, I demand, as you are a gentleman, a Christian, and a fellow-subject, who, though every other motive should be overlooked, ought to interest himself in my case as a common concern, and concur, with all your power, towards the punishment of those who dare commit such outrages against the liberty of your country.'

The doctor seemed to be a little disconcerted; but, after some recollection, resumed his air of sufficiency and importance, and assured our adventurer, he would do him all the service in his power; but, in the mean time, advised him to take the potion he had prescribed.

The knight's eyes lightening with indignation, 'I am now convinced,' cried he, 'that you are an accomplice in the villany which has been practised upon me; that you are a sordid wretch, without principle or feeling; a disgrace to the faculty, and a reproach to human nature. Yes, sirrah, you are the most perfidious of all assassins; you are the hireling minister of the worst of all villains, who, from motives even baser than malice, envy, and revenge, rob the innocent of all the comforts of life, brand them with the imputation of madness; the most cruel species of slander, and wantonly protract their misery, by leaving them in the most shocking confinement, a prey to reflections infinitely more bitter than death. But I will

1m. Do me justice at your peril: I demand the pro-

tection of the legislature : if I am refused, remember a day of reckoning will come : you, and the rest of the miscreants who have combined against me, must, in order to cloak your treachery, have recourse to murder ; an expedient, which I believe you very capable of embracing ; for a man of my rank and character cannot be much longer concealed. Tremble, caitiff, at the thoughts of my release. In the mean time, begone, lest my just resentment impel me to dash out your brains upon that marble : away !'

The honest doctor was not so firmly persuaded of his patient's lunacy, as to reject his advice, which he made what haste he could to follow, when an unexpected accident intervened. That this may be properly introduced, we must return to the knight's brace of trusty friends, captain Crowe and lawyer Clarke, whom we left in sorrowful deliberation upon the fate of their patron. Clarke's genius being rather more fruitful in resources than that of the seaman, he suggested an advertisement, which was accordingly inserted in the daily papers ; importing, that,

' Whereas a gentleman of considerable rank and fortune has suddenly disappeared, on such a night, from his house, near Golden-square, in consequence of a letter delivered to him by a porter, and there is great reason to believe some violence has been offered to his life ; any person, capable of giving such information, as may tend to clear up this transaction, shall, by applying to Mr. Thomas Clarke, attorney, at his lodgings in Upper Brook-street, receive proper security for the reward of one hundred guineas, to be paid to him upon his making the discovery required.'

The porter, who delivered the letter, appeared accordingly ; but could give no other information, except that it was put into his hand with a shilling, by a man muffled up in a great coat, who stopped him for the purpose, in his passing through Queen-street. It was necessary that the advertisement should produce an effect upon another person, who was no other than the hackney coachman who drove our hero to the place of his imprisonment. This fellow had been enjoined secrecy, and indeed bribed to hold his tongue, by a considerable gratification, which, it was supposed, would have been effectual, as the man was a master-coachman in good circumstances, and well

known to the keeper of the mad-house, by whom he had been employed on former occasions of the same nature. Perhaps his fidelity to his employer, re-enforced by the hope of many future jobs of that kind, might have been proof against the offer of fifty pounds; but double that sum was a temptation he could not resist. He no sooner read the intimation in the Daily Advertiser, over his morning's pot at an alehouse, than he entered into consultation with his own thoughts; and, having no reason to doubt that this was the very fare he had conveyed, he resolved to earn the reward, and abstain from all such adventures in time coming. He had the precaution, however, to take an attorney along with him to Mr. Clarke, who entered into a conditional bond; and, with the assistance of his uncle, deposited the money, to be forthcoming when the conditions should be fulfilled. These previous measures being taken, the coachman declared what he knew, and discovered the house in which sir Launcelot had been immured. He moreover accompanied our two adherents to a judge's chamber, where he made oath to the truth of his information; and a warrant was immediately granted to search the house of Bernard Shackle, and set at liberty sir Launcelot Greaves, if there found.

Fortified with this authority, they engaged a constable with a formidable posse; and, embarking them in coaches, repaired, with all possible expedition, to the house of Mr. Shackle, who did not think proper to dispute their claim, but admitted them, though not without betraying evident symptoms of consternation. One of the servants directing them, by his master's order, to sir Launcelot's apartment, they hurried up stairs in a body, occasioning such a noise, as did not fail to alarm the physician, who had just opened the door to retire, when he perceived their intrusion. Captain Crowe, conjecturing he was guilty from the confusion that appeared in his countenance, made no scruple of seizing him by the collar, as he endeavoured to retreat; while the tender-hearted Tom Clarke, running up to the knight with his eyes brimful of joy and affection, forgot all the forms of distant re-

spect, and, throwing his arms around his neck, blubbered in his bosom.

Our hero did not receive this proof of his attachment unmoved. He strained him in his embrace, honoured him with the title of his deliverer, and asked him by what miracle he had discovered the place of his confinement. The lawyer began to unfold the various steps he had taken with equal minuteness and self-complacency; when Crowe, dragging the doctor still by the collar, shook his old friend by the hand, protesting he was never so overjoyed since he got clear of the Sally Rover on the coast of Barbary; and that, two glasses ago, he would have started all the money he had in the world in the hold of any man who would have shown sir Launcelot safe at his moorings. The knight, having made a proper return to this sincere manifestation of good-will, desired him to dismiss that worthless fellow, meaning the doctor, who, finding himself released, withdrew with some precipitation.

Then our adventurer, attended by his friends, walked with a deliberate pace to the outward gate, which he found open; and getting into one of the coaches, was entertained by the way to his own house with a detail of every measure which had been pursued for his release. In his own parlour he found Miss Dolly Cowslip, who had been waiting with great fear and impatience for the issue of Mr. Clarke's adventure. She now fell upon her knees, and bathed the knight's hand with her tears of joy; while the face of this young woman, recalling the idea of her mistress, roused his heart to strong emotion, and stimulated his mind to the immediate achievement he had already planned. As for Crabshaw, he was not the last to signify his satisfaction at his master's return. After having kissed the hem of his garment, he repaired to the stable, where he communicated these tidings to his friend Gilbert, whom he saddled and bridled: the same office he performed for Bronzomarte; then putting on his squire-like attire and accoutrements, he mounted one, and led the other to the knight's door, before which he paraded, uttering from time to time repeated shouts, to



the no small entertainment of the populace, until he received orders to house his companions. Thus commanded, he led them back to their stalls, resumed his livery, and rejoined his fellow-servants, who were resolved to celebrate the day with banquets and rejoicings.

Their master's heart was not sufficiently at ease to share in their festivity. He held a consultation with his friends in the parlour, whom he acquainted with the reasons he had to believe Miss Darnel was confined in the same house which had been his prison ;—a circumstance, which filled them with equal pleasure and astonishment. Dolly, in particular, weeping plentifully, conjured him to deliver her dear lady without delay. Nothing now remained but to concert the plan for her deliverance. As Aurelia had informed Dolly of her connexion with Mrs. Kawdle, at whose house she proposed to lodge, before she was overtaken on the road by her uncle, this particular was now imparted to the council, and struck a light which seemed to point out the direct way to Miss Darnel's enlargement.

Our hero, accompanied by Miss Cowslip and Tom Clarke, set out immediately for the house of doctor Kawdle, who happened to be abroad ; but his wife received him with great courtesy. She was a well-bred, sensible, genteel woman, and strongly attached to Aurelia by the ties of affection as well as of consanguinity. She no sooner learned the situation of her cousin, than she expressed the most impatient concern for her being set at liberty ; and assured sir Launcelot, she would concur in any scheme he should propose for that purpose. There was no room for hesitation or choice : he attended her immediately to the judge, who, upon proper application, issued another search-warrant for Aurelia Darnel. The constable and his posse were again retained ; and sir Launcelot Greaves once more crossed the threshold of Mr. Bernard Shackle. Nor was the search-warrant the only implement of justice with which he had furnished himself for this purpose. In going thither, they agreed upon the method in which they should introduce themselves gradually to Miss Darnel, that her tender na-

ture might not be too much shocked by their sudden appearance.

When they arrived at the house, therefore, and produced their credentials, in consequence of which a female attendant was directed to show the lady's apartment; Miss Dolly first entered the chamber of the accomplished Aurelia, who, lifting up her eyes, screamed aloud, and flew into the arms of her faithful Cowslip. Some minutes elapsed before Dolly could make shift to exclaim, 'Am coom to live and daai with my beloved leady!'—'Dear Dolly!' cried her mistress, 'I cannot express the pleasure I have in seeing you again. Good heavens! what solitary hours of keen affliction have I passed since we parted! But, tell me, how did you discover the place of my retreat? has my uncle relented? do I owe your coming to his indulgence?'

Dolly answered in the negative; and by degrees gave her to understand that her cousin, Mrs. Kawdle, was in the next room: that lady immediately appeared, and a very tender scene of recognition passed between the two relations. It was she who, in the course of conversation, perceiving that Aurelia was composed, declared the happy tidings of her approaching deliverance. When the other eagerly insisted upon knowing to whose humanity and address she was indebted for this happy turn of fortune, her cousin declared the obligation was due to a young gentleman of Yorkshire, called sir Launcelot Greaves. At mention of that name, her face was overspread with a crimson glow, and her eyes beamed with redoubled splendor. 'Cousin,' said she, with a sigh, 'I know not what to say: that gentleman, sir Launcelot Greaves, was surely born—Lord bless me! I tell you, cousin, he has been my guardian angel.'

Mrs. Kawdle, who had maintained a correspondence with her by letters, was no stranger to the former part of the connexion subsisting between those two lovers, and had always favoured the pretensions of our hero, without being acquainted with his person. She now observed, with a smile, that as Aurelia esteemed the knight her guardian angel, and he adored her as a demi-deity, na-

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were sacred to have intended them for each other; for  
 such sublime ideas exalted them both above the sphere  
 of ordinary mortals. She then ventured to intimate that  
 he was in the house, impatient to pay his respects in  
 person. At this declaration, the colour vanished from  
 her cheeks, which, however, soon underwent a total suf-  
 fusion. Her heart panted; her bosom heaved; and her  
 slender frame was agitated by transports rather violent  
 and displeasing. She soon, however, recollected her-  
 self; and her native serenity returned; when, rising from  
 her seat, she declared she would see him in the next  
 apartment, where he stood in the most tumultuous sus-  
 pense, waiting for permission to approach her person.  
 There she broke in upon him, arrayed in an elegant white  
 address, the emblem of her purity, beaming forth the  
 emanations of amazing beauty, warmed and improved  
 with a glow of gratitude and affection. His heart was  
 too big for utterance; he ran towards her with rapture,  
 and, throwing himself at her feet, imparted a respectful  
 kiss on her lily hand. 'This, divine Aurelia,' cried he,  
 'is a foretaste of that ineffable bliss, which you was born  
 to bestow. Do I then live to see you smile again? to  
 see you restored to liberty; your mind at ease, and your  
 health unimpaired?'—'You have lived,' said she, 'to see  
 my obligations to sir Launcelot Greaves accumulated in  
 such a manner, that a whole life spent in acknowledgment  
 will scarce suffice to demonstrate a due sense of his good-  
 ness.'—'You greatly overrate my services, which have  
 been rather the duties of common humanity, than the efforts  
 of a generous passion, too noble to be thus evinced: but  
 let not my unseasonable transports detain you a moment  
 longer on this detested scene. Give me leave to hand  
 you into the coach, and commit you to the care of this  
 good lady, attended by this honest young gentleman, who  
 is my particular friend.' So saying, he presented Mr.  
 Thomas Clarke, who had the honour to salute the fair  
 hand of the ever-amiable Aurelia.

The ladies being safely coached, under the escort of  
sir Launcelot assured them, he should wait  
the evening at the house of Dr. Kawdle,

whither they immediately directed their course. Our hero, who remained with the constable and his gang, inquired for Mr. Bernard Shackle, upon whose person he intended to serve a writ of conspiracy, over and above a prosecution for robbery, in consequence of his having disencumbered the knight of his money and other effects, on the first night of his confinement. Mr. Shackle had discretion enough to avoid this encounter, and even to anticipate the indictment for felony, by directing one of his servants to restore the cash and papers, which our adventurer accordingly received before he quitted the house.

In the prosecution of his search after Shackle, he chanced to enter the chamber of the bard, whom he found in *deshabille*, writing at a table, with a bandage over one eye, and his head covered with a night-cap of baize. The knight, having made an apology for his intrusion, desired to know if he could be of any service to Mr. Distich, as he was now at liberty to use the little influence he had for the relief of his fellow-sufferers. The poet, having eyed him for some time askance, ‘I told you,’ said he, ‘your stay in this place would be of short duration. I have sustained a small disaster on my left eye, from the hands of a rascally cordwainer, who pretends to believe himself the king of Prussia; and I am now in the very act of galling his majesty with keen iambics. If you can help me to a roll of tobacco, and a bottle of geneva, so; if you are not so inclined, your humble servant: I shall share in the joy of your deliverance.’

The knight declined gratifying him in these particulars, which he apprehended might be prejudicial to his health; but offered his assistance in redressing his grievances, provided he laboured under any cruel treatment or inconvenience. ‘I comprehend the full extent of your generosity,’ replied the satirist; ‘you are willing to assist me in every thing, except the only circumstances in which assistance is required. God b’w’ye. If you see Ben Bullock, tell him I wish he would not dedicate any more of his works to me. D—n the fellow; he has changed

his note, and begins to snivel. For my part, I stick to my former maxim, defy all the world, and will die hard, even if death should be preceded by damnation.'

The knight, finding him incorrigible, left him to the slender chance of being one day comforted by the dram-bottle; but resolved, if possible, to set on foot an accurate inquiry into the economy and transactions of this private inquisition, that ample justice might be done in favour of every injured individual confined within its walls. In the afternoon he did not fail to visit his Aurelia; and all the protestations of their mutual passion were once more interchanged. He now produced the letter, which had caused such fatal disquiet in his bosom; and Miss Darnel no sooner eyed the paper, than she recollected it was a formal dismissal, which she had intended and directed for Mr. Sycamore. This the uncle had intercepted, and cunningly enclosed in another cover, addressed to sir Launcelot Greaves, who was now astonished beyond measure to see the mystery so easily unfolded. The joy, that now diffused itself in the hearts of our lovers, is more easily conceived than described; but, in order to give a stability to this mutual satisfaction, it was necessary that Aurelia should be secured from the tyranny of her uncle, whose power of guardianship would not otherwise, for some months, expire.

Doctor Kawdle and his lady having entered into their deliberations on this subject, it was agreed that Miss Darnel should have recourse to the protection of the lord chancellor; but such application was rendered unnecessary by the unexpected arrival of John Clump, with the following letter to Mrs. Kawdle from the steward of Antony Darnel, dated at Aurelia's house in the country:—

'Madam,

'It has pleased God to afflict Mr. Darnel with a severe stroke of the dead-palsy: he was taken yesterday, and now lies insensible, seemingly at the point of death. Among the papers in his pocket, I found the enclosed, by which it appears, that my honoured young lady, Miss Darnel, is confined in a private madhouse. I am afraid Mr. Darnel's fate is a just judgment of God upon him, for his cruelty to a fellow person. I need not exhort you, madam, to take, upon the receipt of this, such measures as will be necessary

for the enlargement of my poor young lady. In the mean time, I shall do the needful, for the preservation of her property in this place, and send you an account of any farther alteration that may happen; being very respectfully, madam, your most obedient, humble servant,  
'RALPH MATTOCKS.'

Clump had posted up to London with this intimation, on the wings of love; and, being covered with clay from the heels to the eyes upwards, he appeared in such an unfavourable light at doctor Kawdle's door, that the footman refused him admittance. Nevertheless, he pushed him aside, and fought his way up stairs into the dining-room, where the company was not a little astonished at such an apparition. The fellow himself was no less amazed at seeing Aurelia, and his own sweetheart Miss Dolly Cowslip. He forthwith fell upon his knees, and, in silence, held out the letter, which was taken by the doctor, and presented to his wife, according to the direction. She did not fail to communicate the contents, which were far from being unwelcome to the individuals who composed this little society. Mr. Clump was honoured with the approbation of the young lady, who commended him for his zeal and expedition; bestowed upon him a handsome gratuity in the mean time; and desired to see him again, when he should be properly refreshed, after the fatigue he had undergone.

Mr. Thomas Clarke, being consulted on this occasion, gave it as his opinion, that Miss Darnel should, without delay, choose another guardian for the few months that remained of her minority. This opinion was confirmed by the advice of some eminent lawyers, to whom immediate recourse was had; and Dr. Kawdle, being the person pitched upon for this office, the necessary forms were executed with all possible despatch. The first use the doctor made of his guardianship, was to sign a power, constituting Mr. Ralph Mattocks his attorney *pro tempore*, for managing the estate of Miss Aurelia Darnel; and this was forwarded to the steward by the hands of Clump, who set out with it for the seat of Darnel-hill, though not without a heavy heart, occasioned by some

intimation he had received, concerning the connexion between his dear Dolly, and Mr. Clarke the lawyer.

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CHAP. XXV.—Which, it is to be hoped, will be, on more accounts than one, agreeable to the reader.

Sir Launcelot, having vindicated the liberty, confirmed the safety, and secured the heart of his charming Aurelia, now found leisure to unravel the conspiracy which had been executed against his person; and, with that view, commenced a law-suit against the owner of the house, where he and his mistress had been separately confined. Mr. Shackle was, notwithstanding all the submissions and atonement which he offered to make, either in private or in public, indicted on the statute of kidnapping, tried, convicted, punished by a severe fine, and standing in the pillory. A judicial writ *ad inquirendum* being executed, the prisons of his inquisition were laid open, and several innocent captives enlarged.

In the course of Shackle's trial, it appeared that the knight's confinement was a scheme executed by his rival, Mr. Sycamore, according to the advice of his counsellor Dawdle, who, by this contrivance, had reconciled himself to his patron, after having deserted him in the day of battle. Our hero was so incensed at the discovery of Sycamore's treachery and ingratitude, that he went in quest of him immediately, to take vengeance on his person, accompanied by captain Crowe, who wanted to balance accounts with Mr. Dawdle: but those gentlemen had wisely avoided the impending storm, by retiring to the continent, on pretence of travelling for improvement.

Sir Launcelot was not so much of a knight-errant, as to leave Aurelia to the care of Providence, and pursue the traitors to the farthest extremities of the earth: he practised a much more easy, certain, and effectual method of revenge, by instituting a process against them,

which, after writs of *capias*, *alias*, *et. pluries*, had been repeated, subjected them both to outlawry. Mr. Sycamore and his friend, being thus deprived of the benefit of the law by their own neglect, would likewise have forfeited their goods and chattels to the king, had they not made such submissions as appeased the wrath of sir Launcelot and captain Crowe: then they ventured to return, and by dint of interest obtained a reversal of the outlawry: but this grace they did not enjoy, till long after our adventurer was happily established in life.

While the knight waited impatiently for the expiration of Aurelia's minority, and, in the mean time, consoled himself with the imperfect happiness arising from her conversation, and those indulgences which the most unblemished virtue could bestow; captain Crowe projected another plan of vengeance against the conjurer, whose lying oracles had cost him such a world of vexation. The truth is, the captain began to be tired of idleness, and undertook this adventure to keep his hand in use. He imparted his design to Crabshaw, who had likewise suffered in spirit from the predictions of the said offender, and was extremely well disposed to assist in punishing the false prophet. He now took it for granted that he should not be hanged for stealing a horse; and thought it very hard to pay so much money for a deceitful prophecy, which, in all likelihood, would never be fulfilled.

Actuated by these motives, they set out together for the house of consultation, but they found it shut up and abandoned; and, upon inquiry in the neighbourhood, learned that the conjurer had moved his quarters that very day, on which the captain had recourse to his art. This was actually the case: he knew the fate of sir Launcelot would soon come to light, and he did not choose to wait the consequence. He had other motives for decamping. He had run a score at a public-house, which he had no mind to discharge; and wanted to disengage himself from his female associate, who knew too much of his affairs to be kept at a proper distance. All these purposes he had answered, by retreating softly, without beat of drum, while his sibyl was abroad, run-



ning down prey for his devouring. He had not, however, taken his measures so cunningly, but that this old hag discovered his new lodgings, and, in revenge, gave information to the publican. This creditor took out a writ accordingly; and the bailiff had just secured his person, as captain Crowe and Timothy Crabshaw chanced to pass by the door in their way homewards, through an obscure street near the Seven Dials.

The conjurer, having no subterfuge left, but a great many particular reasons for avoiding an explanation with the justice, like the man between the devil and the deep sea, of two evils chose the least; and, beckoning to the captain, called him by his name. Crowe, thus addressed, replied, with a 'Hilloah!' and, looking towards the place from whence he was hailed, at once recognised the necromancer. Without farther hesitation, he sprang across the street, and, collaring Albumazar, exclaimed, 'Aha! old boy, is the wind in that corner? I thought we should grapple one day: now will I bring you up by the head, though all the devils in hell were blowing abaft the beam.'

The bailiff, seeing his prisoner so roughly handled before, and, at the same time, assaulted behind by Crabshaw, who cried, 'Show me a liar, and I'll show you a thief: who is to be hanged now?'—I say, the bailiff, fearing he should lose the benefit of his job, began to put on his contentious face, and, declaring the doctor was his prisoner, swore he could not surrender him, without a warrant from the lord chief justice. The whole group adjourning into the parlour, the conjurer desired to know of Crowe, whether sir Launcelot was found. Being answered, 'Ey, cy, safe enough to see you made fast in the bilboes, brother;' he told the captain, he had something of consequence to communicate for his advantage; and proposed that Crowe and Crabshaw should bail the action, which lay only for a debt of three pounds.

Crowe stormed, and Crabshaw grinned at this modest proposal; but when they understood that they could only be bound for his appearance, and reflected that they need not part with him, until his body should be sur-

rendered unto justice, they consented to give bail; and, the bond being executed, conveyed him directly to the house of our adventurer. The boisterous Crowe introduced him to sir Launcelot, with such an abrupt, unconnected detail of his offence, as the knight could not understand without Timothy's annotations. These were followed by some questions put to the conjurer, who, laying aside his black gown, and plucking off his white beard, exhibited, to the astonished spectators, the very individual countenance of the empirical politician Ferret, who had played our hero such a slippery trick after the electioneering adventure.

'I perceive,' said he, 'you are preparing to expostulate and upbraid me, for having given a false information against you to the country justice. I look upon mankind to be in a state of nature;—a truth, which Hobbes has stumbled upon by accident. I think every man has a right to avail himself of his talents, even at the expense of his fellow-creatures; just as we see the fish, and other animals of the creation, devouring one another. I found the justice but one degree removed from idiotism; and, knowing that he would commit some blunder in the execution of his office, which would lay him at your mercy, I contrived to make his folly the instrument of my escape. I was dismissed, without being obliged to sign the information I had given; and you took ample vengeance for his tyranny and impertinence. I came to London, where my circumstances obliged me to live in disguise. In the character of a conjurer, I was consulted by your follower Crowe, and your squire Crabshaw. I did little or nothing but echo back the intelligence they brought me, except prognosticating that Crabshaw would be hanged;—a prediction, to which I found myself so irresistibly impelled, that I am persuaded it was the real effect of inspiration. I am now arrested for a paltry sum of money, and, moreover, liable to be sent to Bridewell as an impostor. Let those answer for my conduct, whose cruelty and insolence have driven me to the necessity of using such subterfuges. I have been oppressed and persecuted by the government for speaking truth. Your omnipotent laws have recon-

ciled contradictions : that, which is acknowledged to be truth in fact, is construed falsehood in law ; and great reason we have to boast of a constitution founded on the basis of absurdity. But, waving these remarks, I own I am unwilling to be either imprisoned for debt, or punished for imposture : I know how far to depend upon generosity, and what is called benevolence, words to amuse the weak-minded : I build upon a surer bottom ; I will bargain for your assistance : it is in my power to put twelve thousand pounds in the pocket of Samuel Crowe, that there sea-ruffian, who, by his good-will, would hang me to the yard's arm.'

Here he was interrupted by the seaman, ' D—n your rat's eyes ! none of your—hang thee ! fish my topmasts ! if the rope was fairly reeved, and the tackle sound, d'ye see —' Mr. Clarke, who was present, began to stare ; while the knight assured Ferret, that if he was really able and willing to serve captain Crowe in any thing essential, he should be amply rewarded. In the mean time, he discharged the debt, and assigned him an apartment in his own house. That same day, Crowe, by the advice of sir Launcelot and his nephew, entered into conditional articles with the cynic, to allow him the interest of fifteen hundred pounds for life, provided, by his means, the captain should obtain possession of the estate of Hobby-hole, in Yorkshire, which had belonged to his grandfather, and of which he was heir of blood.

This bond being executed, Mr. Ferret discovered that he himself was the lawful husband of Bridget Maple, aunt to Samuel Crowe, by a clandestine marriage ; which, however, he convinced them he could prove by undeniable evidence. This being the case, she, the said Bridget Maple, alias Ferret, was a *couverte femme*, consequently could not transact any deed of alienation without his concurrence : *ergo*, the docking of the entail estate of Hobby-hole was illegal, and of none effect. This was a very agreeable declaration to the whole company, who did not fail to congratulate captain Crowe on the prospect of his being restored to his inheritance. Tom Clarke, in particular, protested, with tears in his eyes, that it

gave him unspeakable joy; and his tears trickled the faster, when Crowe, with an arch look, signified, that, now he was pretty well victualled for life, he had some thoughts of embarking on the voyage of matrimony.

But that point of happiness, to which, as the north pole, the course of these adventures has been invariably directed, was still unattained; we mean, the indissoluble union of the accomplished sir Launcelot Greaves and the enchanting Miss Darnel. Our hero now discovered in his mistress a thousand charms, which hitherto he had no opportunity to contemplate. He found her beauty excelled by her good sense, and her virtue superior to both: he found her untainted by that giddiness, vanity, and affectation, which distinguish the fashionable females of the present age: he found her uninfected by the rage for diversion and dissipation; for noise, tumult, gewgaws, glitter, and extravagance: he found her not only raised by understanding and taste far above the amusements of little, vulgar minds; but even exalted by uncommon genius, and refined reflection, so as to relish the more sublime enjoyments of rational pleasure: he found her possessed of that vigour of mind, which constitutes true fortitude, and vindicates the empire of reason: he found her heart incapable of disguise or dissimulation; frank, generous, and open; susceptible of the most tender impressions; glowing with a keen sense of honour, and melting with humanity. A youth of his sensibility could not fail of being deeply affected by such attractions. The nearer he approached the centre of happiness, the more did the velocity of his passion increase. Her uncle still remained insensible, as it were, in the arms of death. Time seemed to linger in its lapse, till the knight was inflamed to the most eager degree of impatience: he communicated his distress to Aurelia; he pressed her, with the most pathetic remonstrances, to abridge the torture of his suspense: he interested Mrs. Kawdle in his behalf; and, at length, his importunity succeeded. The bans of marriage were regularly published; and the ceremony was performed in the parish church, in pre-

sence of Dr. Kawdle and his lady, captain Crowe, lawyer Clarke, and Miss Dolly Cowslip.

The bride, instead of being disguised in tawdry stuffs of gold or silver, and sweating under a harness of diamonds, according to the elegant taste of the times, appeared in a negligee of plain blue satin, without any other jewels than her eyes, which far outshone all that ever were produced by the mines of Golconda. Her hair had no extraneous ornament, other than a small sprig of artificial roses; but the dignity of her air, the elegance of her shape, the sweetness and sensibility of her countenance, added to such warmth of colouring, and such exquisite symmetry of features, as could not be excelled by human nature, attracted the eyes, and excited the admiration of all the beholders: the effect they produced in the heart of sir Launcelot was such a rapture as we cannot pretend to describe. He made his appearance, on this occasion, in a white coat, and blue satin vest, both embroidered with silver; and all who saw him could not but own that he alone seemed worthy to possess the lady whom Heaven had destined for his consort. Captain Crowe had taken off a blue suit of clothes, strongly guarded with bars of broad gold lace, in order to honour the nuptials of his friend: he wore upon his head a bagwig *à la pigeon*, made by an old acquaintance in Wapping; and to his side he had girded a huge plate-hilted sword, which he had bought of a recruiting-serjeant. Mr. Clarke was dressed in pompadour, with gold buttons; and his lovely Dolly, in a smart checked lutestring, a present from her mistress.

The whole company dined, by invitation, at the house of doctoor Kawdle; and here it was that the two most deserving lovers on the face of the earth attained to the consummation of all earthly felicity. The captain and his nephew had a hint to retire in due time: Mrs. Kawdle conducted the amiable Aurelia, trembling, to the marriage-bed: our hero, glowing with a bridegroom's ardour, claimed the husband's privilege: Hymen lighted up his brightest torch at Virtue's lamp, and every star

shed its happiest influence on their heaven-directed union. Instructions had been already despatched to prepare Greavesbury-hall for the reception of its new mistress ; and for that place the new-married couple set out next morning, according to the plan which had been previously concerted. Sir Launcelot and lady Greaves, accompanied by Mrs. Kawdle, and attended by Dolly, travelled in their own coach, drawn by six dappled horses ; Doctor Kawdle, with captain Crowe, occupied the doctor's post-chariot, provided with four bays ; Mr. Clarke had the honour to bestride the loins of Bronzomarte ; Mr. Ferret was mounted upon an old hunter ; Crabshaw stuck close to his friend Gilbert ; and two other horsemen completed the retinue. There was not an aching heart in the whole cavalcade, except that of the young lawyer, which was, by turns, invaded with hot desires and chilling scruples. Though he was fond of Dolly to distraction, his regard to worldly reputation, and his attention to worldly interest, were continually raising up bars to a legal gratification of his love. His pride was startled at the thought of marrying the daughter of a poor country publican ; and he moreover dreaded the resentment of his uncle Crowe, should he take any step of this nature without his concurrence. Many a wishful look did he cast at Dolly, the tears standing in his eyes ; and many a woful sigh did he utter.

Lady Greaves immediately perceived the situation of his heart, and by questioning Miss Cowslip, discovered a mutual passion between these two lovers. She consulted her dear knight on the subject ; and he catechised the lawyer, who pleaded guilty. The captain being sounded, as to his opinion, declared he would be steered in that, as well as every other course of life, by sir Launcelot and his lady, who he verily believed were beings of an order superior to the ordinary race of mankind. This favourable response being obtained from the sailor, our hero took an opportunity on the road, one day after dinner, in presence of the whole company, to accost the lawyer in these words :—‘ My good friend Clarke, I have your

happiness very much at heart : your father was an honest man, to whom my family had manifold obligations : I have had these many years a personal regard for yourself, derived from your own integrity of heart, and goodness of disposition. I see you are affected, and shall be brief :— besides this regard, I am indebted to your friendship for the liberty—what shall I say ?—for the inestimable happiness I now enjoy, in possessing the most excellent— but I understand that significant glance of my Aurelia : I will not offend her delicacy. The truth is, my obligation is very great, and it is time I should evince my gratitude : if the stewardship of my estate is worth your acceptance, you shall have it immediately, together with the house and farm of Cockerton, in my neighbourhood. I know you have a passion for Miss Dolly ; and believe she looks upon you with the eyes of tender prepossession : don't blush, Dolly. Besides your agreeable person, which all the world must approve, you can boast of virtue, fidelity, and friendship. Your attachment to lady Greaves, neither she nor I shall ever forget. If you are willing to unite your fate with Mr. Clarke, your mistress gives me leave to assure you she will stock the farm at her own expense ; and we will celebrate the wedding at Greavesbury-hall.'

By this time, the hearts of these grateful lovers had overflowed. Dolly was sitting on her knees, bathing her lady's hand with her tears ; and Mr. Clarke appeared in the same attitude by sir Launcelot. The uncle, almost as much affected as the nephew, by the generosity of our adventurer, cried aloud, ' I pray God that you and your glorious consort may have smooth seas and gentle gales whithersoever you are bound. As for my kinsman Tom, I'll give him a thousand pounds to set him fairly afloat ; and if he do not prove a faithful tender to you his benefactor, I hope he will founder in this world, and be d—d in that which is to come.' Nothing was now wanting to the completion of their happiness, but the consent of Dolly's mother, at the Black Lion, who they did not suppose could have any objection to such an ad-

vantageous match for her daughter; but in this particular they were mistaken.

In the mean time, they arrived at the village where the knight had exercised the duties of chivalry; and there he received the gratulation of Mr. Fillet, and the attorney who had offered to bail him before justice Gobble. Mutual civilities having passed, they gave him to understand, that Gobble and his wife were turned methodists. All the rest of the prisoners whom he had delivered came to testify their gratitude, and were hospitably entertained. Next day, they halted at the Black Lion, where the good woman was overjoyed to see Dolly so happily preferred: but when sir Launcelot unfolded the proposed marriage, she interrupted him with a scream: 'Christ Jesus forbid—marry and amen! match with her own brother?'

At this exclamation, Dolly fainted; her lover stood with his hair erect, and his mouth wide open; Crowe stared; while the knight and his lady expressed equal surprise and concern. When sir Launcelot entreated Mrs. Cowslip to explain this mystery, she told him, that, about sixteen years ago, Mr. Clarke senior had brought Dolly, then an infant, to her house, when she and her late husband lived in another part of the country; and, as she had then been lately delivered of a child, which did not live, he hired her as a nurse to the little foundling. He owned she was a love-begotten babe, and, from time to time, paid handsomely for the board of Dolly, who he desired might pass for her own daughter. In his last illness, he assured her he had taken care to provide for the child; but, since his death, she had received no account of any such provision. She, moreover, informed his honour, that Mr. Clarke had deposited in her hands a diamond ring, and a sealed paper, never to be opened without his order, until Dolly should be demanded in marriage by the man she should like; and not then, except in the presence of the clergyman of the parish. 'Send for the clergyman this instant,' cried our hero, reddening, and fixing his eyes on Dolly; 'I hope all will yet be well.'

The vicar arriving, and being made acquainted with



the nature of the case, the landlady produced the paper, which, being opened, appeared to be an authentic certificate, that the person, commonly known by the name of Dorothy Cowslip, was, in fact, Dorothea Greaves, daughter of Jonathan Greaves, esq., by a young gentlewoman who had been some years deceased.

‘The remaining part of the mystery I myself can unfold,’ exclaimed the knight, while he ran and embraced the astonished Dolly, as his kinswoman: ‘Jonathan Greaves was my uncle, and died before he came of age; so that he could make no settlement on his child, the fruit of a private amour, founded on a promise of marriage, of which this ring was a token. Mr. Clarke, being his confidant, disposed of the child; and, at length, finding his constitution decay, revealed the secret to my father, who, in his will, bequeathed one hundred pounds a year to this agreeable foundling: but, as they both died while I was abroad, and some of the memorandums touching this transaction probably were mislaid, I never, till now, could discover where or how my pretty cousin was situated. I shall recompense the good woman for her care and fidelity, and take pleasure in bringing this affair to a happy issue.’

The lovers were now overwhelmed with transports of joy and gratitude, and every countenance was lighted up with satisfaction. From this place to the habitation of sir Launcelot, the bells were rung in every parish, and the corporation in their formalities congratulated him in every town through which he passed. About five miles from Greavesbury-hall he was met by about five thousand persons, of both sexes and every age, dressed out in their gayest apparel, headed by Mr. Ralph Mattocks from Darnel-hill, and the rector from the knight’s own parish. They were preceded by music, ranged under a great variety of flags and ensigns; and the women, as well as the men, bedizened with fancy-knots and marriage-favours. At the end of the avenue, a select bevy of comely virgins, arrayed in white, and a separate band of choice youths, distinguished by garlands of laurel and holly interwaved, “” into the procession, and sung, in chorus, a rustic

epithalamium composed by the curate. At the gate they were received by the venerable housekeeper, Mrs. Oakly, whose features were so brightened by the occasion, that, with the first glance, she made a conquest of the heart of captain Crowe; and this connexion was improved afterwards into a legal conjunction.

Meanwhile, the houses of Greavesbury-hall and Darnel-hill were set open for the entertainment of all comers, and both echoed with the sounds of festivity.

After the ceremony of giving and receiving visits had been performed by sir Launcelot Greaves and his lady, Mr. Clarke was honoured with the hand of the agreeable Miss Dolly Greaves, and the captain was put in possession of his paternal estate. The perfect and uninterrupted felicity of the knight and his endearing consort diffused itself through the whole adjacent country, as far as their example and influence could extend. They were admired, esteemed, and applauded by every person of taste, sentiment, and benevolence; at the same time, revered, and almost adored by the common people, among whom they suffered not the merciless hand of indigence or misery to seize one single sacrifice.

Ferret, at first, seemed to enjoy his easy circumstances; but the novelty of this situation soon wore off, and all his misanthropy returned. He could not bear to see his fellow-creatures happy around him; and signified his disgust to sir Launcelot, declaring his intention of returning to the metropolis, where he knew there would be always food sufficient for the ravenous appetite of his spleen. Before he departed, the knight made him partake of his bounty, though he could not make him taste of his happiness, which soon received a considerable addition in the birth of a son, destined to be the heir and representative of two worthy families, whose mutual animosity the union of his parents had so happily extinguished.

THE END.



*[Faint handwritten notes at the bottom of the page]*

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